

# Australian **Wild**

*bushwalking, ski touring  
canoeing and climbing magazine*

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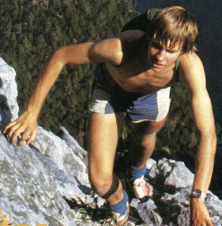
**Bushwalking:  
Budawangs,  
Stirling Ranges,  
New Zealand's  
Stewart Island**

**Dombrovskis photos**

**Canoeing interview**

**Tasmanian caving**

**Classic ski tour**



OCTOBER NOVEMBER DECEMBER (SPRING) 1982 ISSUE 6 \$2.95 NZ

Registered by Australia Post - publication number VB04245

**\$2.50**

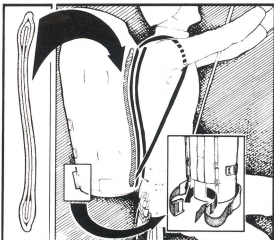
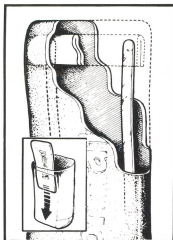


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# Australian Wild

*bushwalking, skitouring  
canoeing and climbing magazine*

October/November/December (Spring) 1982

Vol 2 No 4 (issue 6)

NZ\$2.95\* \$2.50\*

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**Publisher**

WILD PUBLICATIONS PTY LTD

**Distribution**

GORDON & GOTCH LIMITED  
MELBOURNE, SYDNEY

**Printing**

YORK PRESS PTY LTD, MELBOURNE

**Cover** Scrambling to the summit of the monarch of South-west Tasmania, Federation Peak, with Lake Gevees tugging at the walker's heels. Photo by Dave Noble.

**Subscription** rates are currently \$9.95 for one year (four issues), or \$17.95 for two years, by surface mail to addresses in Australia. Add \$43.95 for each four issues to overseas addresses. When moving, advise us immediately of your new and old addresses to avoid lost or delayed copies. Please also send your address label from an envelope received with a copy of *Wild*.

**Advertising** rates available on request.

Copy deadlines (advertising and editorial):

15 October (summer issue), 15 January (autumn), 15 April (winter), 15 July (spring).

Editorial, advertising, subscription, distribution and general correspondence to: Wild Publications Pty Ltd PO Box 415, Prahran, Victoria 3181, Australia. (03) 240 8482.

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\*Maximum recommended retail price only.

Photo Jutta Hosek

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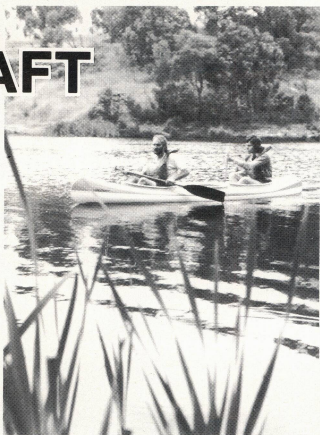
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# Editorial

## The Wilderness That Was



● **AFTER SEVERAL YEARS' ABSENCE**, a recent visit to the Howqua-Jamieson Rivers area of north-east Victoria was a sad and sobering experience.

These once magnificent, unspoiled river valleys have been ruined by major logging roads, visible for miles as unsightly scars snaking around the steep hillsides, opening up a wilderness to their destructive legacy.

The logging appears to have been widespread and of a particularly callous nature. Not only have huge areas of magnificent natural forests been devastated, but the usual trail of havoc that follows logging is more than usually conspicuous: fallen timber, tangled copice growth, rutted side tracks, loading ramps, dug outs and erosion-prone areas denuded of top soil and vegetation.

In the wake of this mayhem have come hordes of four-wheel-drive vehicles and trail bikes. Drivers of the former often seem to have the environmental sensitivity of a runaway tank — and leave similar scars. Sometimes travelling in convoys of as many as 20 vehicles, they have destroyed the once beautiful flats at the Eight Mile Hut site on the Howqua and the Bluff Hut. Their wheel ruts, up to half a metre deep, cover many square metres at each of these formerly peaceful places. The Upper Jamieson Hut has fared little better. (At least it is still standing: someone has cut the remains of the Eight Mile Hut to the ground, apparently with a chain saw.) Vegetation around the hut is now sparse, but there are several giant drums of bottles and cans brought in by four-wheel-drive vehicles.

Trail bikes abound. Many of them are not only unregistered but also off defined tracks. The lack of concern of the responsible authorities for such flagrant law-breaking is surprising, even if their apparent acceptance of the environmental damage caused by trail bikes is not.

There is certainly no place in the bush for roads, let alone the shameful destruction caused by logging, four-

wheel-drive vehicles and trail bikes.

Sheepyard Flat on the Howqua was not long ago a tranquil bush haven. Now, on holiday week-ends, it resembles the parking lot at the

Sign on a four-wheel-drive vehicle at the Upper Jamieson Hut, and below, four-wheel-drive tracks at the Bluff Hut



Melbourne Cricket Ground. The whole area is almost completely devoid of ground cover and low vegetation. There are scores, if not hundreds, of camp fires which have provided an opportunity for an entrepreneur to sell firewood; there is certainly none readily available otherwise. Bike tracks head up adjacent ridges and Forests Commission lavatories and signs, signs (a Forests Commission fetish) complete the wilderness experience.

As administrator for much of north-east Victoria, the Forests Commission of Victoria has a great deal to answer for. One generation of the minority who benefit from milling dollars may accept the mismanagement, but future generations of city-bound Australians are unlikely to thank them.

That this part of Victoria has been extensively and severely damaged in the last 20 years is indisputable. Whether it is already too late to prevent its final destruction is not clear. What is clear is that if we who profess to love the bush don't get off our complacent backside and actively publicize the issue, we can kiss it all good-bye.

*Chris Baxter*  
Editor & Publisher





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# Wild Information

• **Tiger Walkers.** Some members of the Three Peaks Outdoor Society of Sydney have been doing a bit of walking.

Ray Jerrems' Katoomba to Kanangra Walls return record set 14 years ago, which stood at 15 hours 20 minutes, has been broken by Peter Treseder. The record now stands at 14 hours 3 minutes.

Derek Cantle has broken Athol Abraham's 17 year old record by climbing Yerranderie Peak from the Post Office steps to the trig on top of the peak, and returning to the Post Office steps in 31 minutes.

David Drohan has completed a 5 hour 50 minute circuit starting at Katoomba, proceeding over Mt Solitary to Haine's Crossing and returning to Katoomba.

Peter Treseder has completed an 11 hour traverse from Cradle Mountain to Lake St Clair in Tasmania, climbing three peaks on the way. These were Cradle Mountain, Barn Bluff and Mt Ossa.

Beth Ferguson

• **Schools of the Wild.** Following the report on climbing schools in our last issue, another has been announced in Queensland. Rob Staszewski's Mountain Craft teaches climbing and other rucksack sports, including ski touring.

In New South Wales, a new direction in outdoors recreation has been introduced with the establishment of Somerset on the lower Colo River. Somerset provides both 'homestead style' and camping accommodation and courses in a wide range of outdoor activities including canoeing, bushwalking and climbing.

• **Park Writers.** The NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service and the Literature Board of the Australia Council in June announced the 1982 winners of their grants. The main one (\$8,000) went to Anne Wilkinson who is to write about the parks of northern New South Wales.

• **Talking Recreation.** In July a seminar was held in Orange, New South Wales, for representatives of NSW State Recreation Area Trusts and National Parks and Wildlife Service staff. With four million people visiting NSW State Recreation Areas each year, the paper given on environmental planning should have been of particular significance.

• **Karrimor Than Ever.** Following the recent visit to Australia of Mike Parsons, Managing Director of British rucksack sports equipment giant Karrimor International, it is widely

rumoured that Karrimor will establish its own distribution company in Australia next year.

During his visit Mr Parsons gave major local retailers a preview of his company's new range of adventure luggage which is expected to be available to the Australian public before Christmas.

• **Murray Madness.** Each year, in late December, a certain 'madness' invades the Murray River between Yarrowonga and Swan Hill. This is the time of the annual Red Cross Murray River Canoe Marathon, a gruelling slog of 400 kilometres, in the course of which some 500 paddlers in over 300 canoes paddle up to eight hours a day, often in extreme weather conditions.

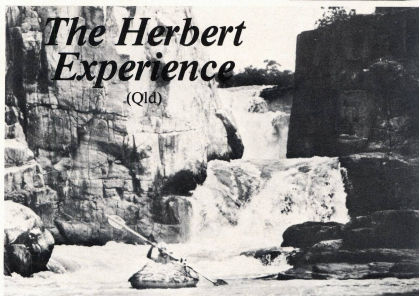
Of course the primary aim of the Marathon is to raise funds to support the humanitarian work of Red Cross. This is done by entrants gaining sponsorship for the distance they paddle, or by raising funds in support of their entry. It also gives highly competitive (and competent) canoeists, as well as recreational paddlers, an opportunity to take part in what has become 'The Great Adventure'.

And it's not all hard work. The Marathon is

Competitors in last year's Red Cross Murray River Canoe Marathon. Australian Red Cross







## ***The Herbert Experience***

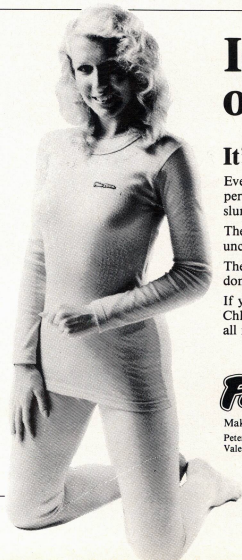
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Drama in the Murray Marathon, and below, New South Wales police helicopter during the Budawang search. Photos Australian Red Cross, and bottom, Dave Noble

typified by an atmosphere of camaraderie and friendship. It can't help but be, when there are more than 3,000 competitors, land support crews and officials moving to the special camping spots in the various towns along the Murray; and what a celebration is held, when everyone reaches Swan Hill, on New Year's Eve!

The Marathon has all sorts of winners; those with outright fastest times, those who win the various sections, and of course those who simply finish the course. But the biggest 'winner' is Red Cross, who last year benefited by more than \$60,000.

If you would like more information or entry forms for 'The Great Adventure' contact Garry Irving, Marathon Co-Ordinator, Victorian Red Cross, 171 City Road, South Melbourne, Victoria, 3205, or phone him on (03) 616 9911. Entries close on 30 November.

Garry Irving

● **Diversions.** As demand for water from the western streams of New South Wales outstrips the amount of water locally available, it is likely that some of the water from the coastal river basins will be diverted inland. The latest study carried out for the Water Resources Commission of NSW has listed five coastal river basins which would be suitable for such diversion. These include the Turruss River and the Snowy River.

Of the four Snowy schemes identified, it is suggested that only one should be investigated in more detail. This scheme involves the construction of a 61 metre high dam on the Snowy River, two kilometres downstream of the confluence with Jacobs River. About 1,760 hectares of land would be flooded, approximately 800 hectares of them within the Kosciuszko National Park.

In northern NSW, the Clarence, Macleay and Manning River basins are suitable for water diversion. In these basins, notably the gorges of the New England Tablelands, there are many suitable dam sites.

Such dams will inundate substantial stream lengths and will radically change the downstream flow characteristics, water temperature and sediment loads of the rivers, some of which flow through wilderness areas.

These changes, if allowed to occur, will seriously affect both the physical and biological environments of the rivers together with the established outdoor recreational usage of the areas.

Russ Bauer

● **Busy Time for Rescues.** Sydney's Span Bushwalking Club suffered another mishap recently when Annette Stewart, a member of a Club abseiling trip in the Kanangra Walls area, slipped and fell four metres whilst ascending Murdering Gully. She suffered

facial and internal injuries. The rescuers considered she would best be moved by helicopter.

High winds and darkness prevented the police helicopter from carrying out the lift until the next morning, when she was airlifted out early from a relatively difficult gully. Considerable credit should go to the pilot.

Span has had helicopter rescues from Spring Creek and Claustal Canyons recently, as well as a triple fatality in Claustal Canyon.

Another large Sydney bushwalking club, the Coast and Mountain Walkers, had four members separate from a main party in the Budawang Ranges in June. After being a day overdue, they were quickly located next morning by members of the search and rescue group of the Federation of Bushwalking Clubs (NSW). The police helicopter assisted by ferrying people out of the area. Ironically, prominent members of the CMW had expressed criticism of the bushwalkers' search and rescue unit a few weeks earlier.

Dave Noble

● **Six Foot Under?** The Six Foot Track, the old road from Katoomba to Jenolan Caves and now a very popular walking route to the Cocks River from Megalong Valley in New South Wales' Blue Mountains, has been periodically subject to problems of access by members of the public.

Recently a party of bushwalkers was challenged by one of the farmers who owns land through which the track passes. The matter is being investigated by Robert Sault, the Tracks and Access Officer of the Federation of Bushwalking Clubs (NSW). So far he has received conflicting advice from the Department of Lands about whether it is a public right of way.

The Department of Lands intends to mark and signpost the track, which is indistinct in places, by 1983.

DN

● **Kosciuszko Tour.** On 19 September the Kosciuszko Tour Committee is holding a ski touring race from Thredbo via Charlottes Pass to Perisher, a distance of about 18 kilometres. There are 16 classes of entries for both teams and individuals.

● **Heard Island.** Plans for the Heard Island Expedition, reported in the fourth issue of *Wild*, are well advanced. The expedition com-

prises 16 people, including a film crew and amateur radio operators, and leaves Perth aboard a 26 metre yacht in January 1983.

To promote the expedition and raise funds, the public are being invited to participate by becoming Associate Members of the expedition. For a donation of \$25, Associate Members receive various benefits including copies of the expedition newsletter. Expedition T-shirts are also available, for \$7 each. Contact Heard Island Expedition, The Residence, Spectacle Island, Sydney 2000.

● **Bluff Blitz.** Bluff Mountain, in the Warrumbungles National Park of northern New South Wales, is one of the biggest cliffs (300 metres) on mainland Australia. Since it was first climbed, by Bryden Allen and John Ewbank, in the early 1960s, only ten more routes (and two girdle traverses) had been added to the main face, which gives outstanding long routes.

The situation was changed somewhat last May when, over three days, a small party from Melbourne added no less than five more routes and major variants to existing climbs. These climbs were up to four grades harder than the previous hardest routes in the area.

Kim Carrigan and Mark Moorhead did some frightening and extremely steep climbing up the arete right of *Ginsberg* to produce *For Starters* (grade 23). The same team, with Mike Law, crossed *Flight of the Phoenix* and finished up *London's Dockyard*, *Cracked Pane* (24). Law and Moorhead filled the obvious gap between *Flight of the Phoenix* and *Elijah: Lusty's* (21). Law and Wild editor Chris Baxter added a steep direct finish to *Flight of the Phoenix* (18) and Carrigan and Baxter added a direct start and direct finish (19) to *Neruda*, making it one of the best and most sustained routes of the grade in Australia.

● **Park Centenary.** The centenary of Fern-tree Gully National Park near Melbourne was commemorated in May. A Committee of Management for the Park (then a reserve for public recreation) was first appointed on 5 May 1882.

The reserve became a National Park in 1927, and has been enlarged several times during its 100-year existence. Today it covers 466 hectares.

● **Prom Photos.** By December 1982, Wilson's Promontory National Park, or 'the





# JH

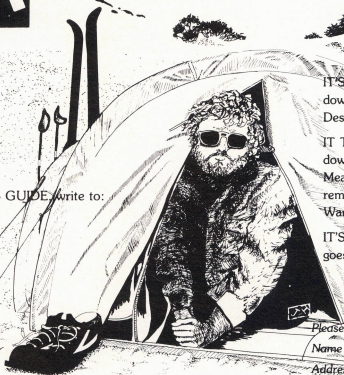
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Prom' as it is known to thousands of Victorians, will have a new Information and Education Centre at Tidal River.

The Victorian National Parks Service, 240 Victoria Parade, East Melbourne, Victoria 3002 is keen to borrow old photos of the area for reproduction, some of which will be displayed in the new Centre.

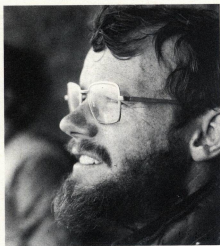
Established in 1905 after persistent agitation from the Field Naturalists Club, Wilson's Promontory National Park in 1980-1981 had as many overnight campers as the nine next most popular National Parks in Victoria.

● **Outdoor Exhibition.** Advertised as the first exhibition of its kind in Australia, the Canoe '82 Outdoor Exhibition is to be held on 10-13 October at the Camberwell Civic Centre in Melbourne. Canoeing and bushwalking manufacturers and suppliers will be displaying their wares at the exhibition which is being widely publicized and is expected to draw a good attendance. Entertainment will include a 'learn to canoe programme'.

● **Victorian Outdoor Education Association.** This organization is attempting to develop a close relationship with clubs, societies, schools, colleges, recreational associations, self-help groups and government instrumentalities. In addition to quarterly newsletters, the resources of the Association's leading professionals are available for consultation.

An important conference covering curriculum design and content in outdoor education

Heard Island expedition co-leader Ross Vining, below, and clockwise, McDonald Islands with Big Ben behind, Big Ben, 'wave clouds' over Heard Island. Photos William Blunt, P Temple, Rod Streeter, G Budd



tion programmes will take place on 26-27 November, followed by the Association's Annual General Meeting on 28 November.

The joining fee is \$15 for a worthy organization: write to PO Box 317, Croydon, Victoria 3136 for details.

Peter Beckman

● **Wilderness Mining.** Applications for Exploration Licences in respect of north-east Victorian wilderness areas are hardly new, but in a recent issue of the Melbourne Age there were notices of six such applications by mining companies (including five by Australian Anglo American Prospecting Pty Ltd). The areas affected include the important bushwalking country around Mt Skene and Suggan Buggan.

● **Every Inch...** In August 1932 the first Rover Scout party visited Victoria's Bogong High Plains in winter. To celebrate 50 years of Rover skiing on the High Plains, a reunion is to be held from 30 October to 2 November. For details contact 72 Queens Road, Melbourne, Victoria 3004.

● **Picture Shows.** Two exhibitions of wilderness photography are being held in Melbourne. Geoff Selton is showing his photos at well-known outdoor shop Nordic Ski and Backpacking on 19-30 October during normal 'shop hours'. David Tatnall's photos of the Grampians will be on display at the Kodak Gallery, Collins Street, from 27 September to 8 October during business hours.

● **Buffalo Epic.** The north wall of Victoria's Mt Buffalo Gorge was recently the scene of a protracted winter epic. Melbourne climbers

Tony Dignan and Geoff Little set out to make the first winter ascent of one of the longest and hardest climbs on the 250 metre wall, indeed in Australia, *Lord Gumtree*.

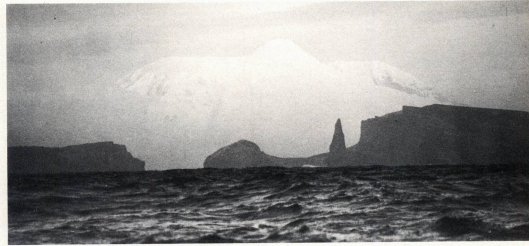
Unlike many parties climbing other routes on this wall (which is well above the snow line) in winter, they experienced heavy snowfalls and true winter conditions. Not only were they frequently soaked, but their water bottles froze solid *inside* their packs. Their ropes also froze so as to be almost unmanageable, often preventing jumaring.

They were on the wall for four days, spending freezing nights in sodden hammocks and took three ten-metre falls (one of which injured Dignan when he plummeted to a belay ledge from the crux pitch) before reaching the top.

● **Plans for Parks.** The imminent publication of management plans for the Coorong and Gammon Ranges National Parks has created much interest in South Australia. Both parks are fragile environments rich in aboriginal heritage. The Coorong, immediately south of Adelaide, is a slender coastal peninsular enclosing an extensive stretch of water fed by the Murray River. It is heavily used for recreation. In contrast, the Gammon Ranges are a relatively pristine wilderness in the northern Flinders Ranges. It will be critical to the future of both areas to see how the forthcoming plans juggle the, at times, competing interests of people and Parks.

Quentin Chester

● **More Outdoor Educators.** An association was recently formed to represent the interests of outdoor educators in South Australia. This group already boasts a handsome newsletter which reports on en-





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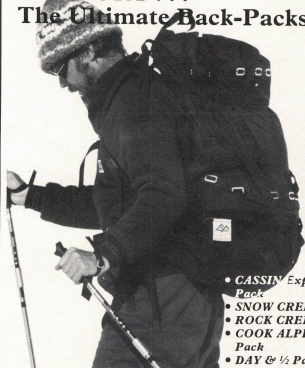
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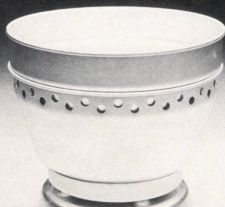
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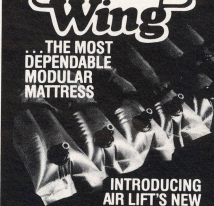
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Bluff Mountain showing the pre-1982 routes and new routes (shown in bold). 1 Stonewall Jackson (20) 2 London's Dockyard (19) 3 Flight of the Phoenix (and direct finish) (17/18) 4 Cracked Pane (24) 5 Lusty's (21) 6 Elijah (17) Aladinsane (with direct finish) (19) 8 Ginsberg (18) 9 Neruda (and direct start and direct finish) (18/19) 10 For Starters (23) 11 Baal (20) 12 Ulysses (20) 13 Icarus (19) 14 Daedalus (19 M1). Keith Lockwood

vironmental and professional lobbying. Those interested should contact OEASA, The Orphanage, 181 Goodwood Road, Millwood, South Australia 5034.

QC

●**The Heysen Trail.** The newly published handbook entitled *The Heysen Trail — Encounter Bay to the Barossa Valley* is a welcome companion to the track maps that cover this 200 kilometre walking track in the Mt Lofty Ranges. This book is a description as seen through the eyes of a geologist, botanist, ornithologist, historian and the track designer. It is hoped that eventually the track will be extended north into the Flinders Ranges. The Heysen Trail book (RRP \$9.50) and maps are available from the State Information Office and outdoor shops.

QC

●**Lake Eyre Walk.** Pioneering South Australian walker Warren Bonython is currently attempting to circumnavigate on foot the vast Lake Eyre in the north of the State. He and partner Terry Krieg are carrying equipment and supplies in two-wheeled carts similar to those used by Warren in his crossing of the Simpson Desert a few years ago. Similar equipment was used by adventurer Hans Tholstrup when he set out in May to walk across the Simpson Desert. The last person before Tholstrup to try that walk, Frenchman Bernard Faton, disappeared in 1975. Claiming a solo effort, Tholstrup was criticized in the press for receiving assistance from mining operations in the area.

QC

●**One Hump or Two?** Since *Wild* correspondent Sandra Bardwell wrote her Macdonnell Ranges track notes for our fourth issue, Alice Springs bushwalkers have formed their own club which already has a membership of over 50: Central Australian Mountain Exploration Lot (CAMEL).

Peter Burton

●**Heritage.** South-west Tasmania has been included on the World Heritage List by the World Heritage Bureau Executive. The decision of the Executive will be put before the World Heritage Council in Pakistan later this year for ratification. The decision of the Executive to affirm the World Heritage status of the South-west increases pressure on the Federal Government to accept its responsibility and protect the South-west.

The area that has been listed includes the South-west National Park and the Franklin-Lower Gordon Wild Rivers National Park. The area omits the eastern and western portions of the South-west which are sought by various companies for woodchipping and mineral exploration.

Bob Burton

●**Another Ski Tow for Mt Field National Park?** The Hobart based Wellington Ski Club has proposed the construction of another ski tow from the parking area at Mt Dobson to the existing unsightly ski tows on Mt Mawson. The reason for another ski tow? To save skiers from having to walk up the hill from the car-park to the existing ski tows.

BB

●**Restrictions on Franklin River Rafter?** The Tasmanian National Parks and Wildlife Service has collated nearly 500 questionnaires completed by Franklin River rafters last summer. The questionnaires were designed to assist the NPWS in the preparation of a Management Plan for the Franklin-Lower Gordon Wild Rivers National Park.

Some restrictions on the number of rafters on the Franklin may be introduced this year to

help avoid the overcrowding problem encountered last year.

BB

●**The Fight for the Franklin.** The campaign to prevent the Gordon-below-Franklin dam being built has been stepped up even further.

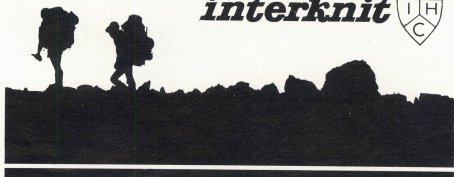
After the election of a Liberal Government in Tasmania the emphasis of the campaign has moved to the national arena. The Tasmanian Wilderness Society conducted a 'no dams' write-in at the ACT State election which recorded a staggering 40.5% write-in in one of the two electorates (Fraser). Several weeks later the TWS took Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser and Treasurer John Howard to the High Court of Australia in an attempt to prevent them allocating money for the construction of the Gordon dam. The writ alleged that Fraser and Howard had ignored the Australian Heritage Act and the Impact of Proposals Act. The challenge failed on a narrow interpretation of whether members of the Government attending Loan Council were bound by the Acts. Significantly the TWS was not challenged on whether it had standing. Justice Mason stated that the TWS 'had a limited financial interest in the area'. Since then the National Conference of the Franklin the platypus bursts through the 'dam' at the opening of the Tasmanian Wilderness Society's Melbourne shop. Mick McGarrie



# Pioneer Socks

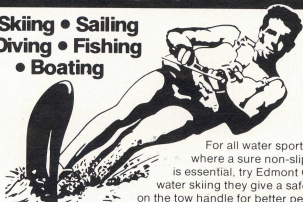
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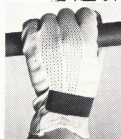


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Australian Labor Party has adopted a policy of 'no dams' and supports the granting of special compensation to Tasmania for not proceeding with the scheme.

In the run up to the Federal election the Fraser Government will be pressured to act or risk losing votes in marginal electorates where public consciousness campaigns have already begun. Assistance required: contact Melbourne 67 5884, Canberra 49 8011, Hobart 34 9366, Sydney 267 7929.

BB

• **And Now for Something Completely Silly.** The Tasmanian Premier has announced a national campaign in support of the dam. This is despite his insistence that the dam is a State issue only.

BB

• **Bulldozer Action.** On 17 June 1982 the Tasmanian Parliament passed the Bill authorising the Tasmania's Hydro-Electric Commission to construct the Gordon-below-Franklin dam in the South-west wilderness. Those areas of Australia's first Wild Rivers National Park needed by the HEC were also revoked by the Parliament.

The South-west, including the Franklin and Gordon Rivers, is Australia's next World Heritage Area (it will be formally accepted in October). We only have four such areas in Australia. The construction of the dam will destroy the heart of this wilderness and it is taking place without a mandate from the people of Australia. The Tasmanian Wilderness Society argues that it is not only environmentally disastrous for Australia, but it is also economically and socially disastrous for Tasmania. Also, it has not been the subject of an independent, open and expert inquiry. At the time of writing the only inquiry conducted outside Tasmania (initiated by the Senate) was still hearing evidence and was not due to report until mid-September. Yet the HEC's bulldozers can't even wait for this Committee's recommendations.

For these reasons, it is the conviction of the TWS that they could not sit by and allow the bulldozers to roll into the South-west without opposition. It is thus a necessary and justifiable part of the campaign to take direct peaceful action to achieve these goals. This will be another stage in the campaign which may continue for some years to come. Hopefully it will be the catalyst which brings about Federal action.

It is by no means a last ditch effort to save the South-west but more a means of preventing initial but possibly severe damage to the area. Other areas of protest will continue alongside direct action including legal moves, political lobbying and media work.

The TWS calls upon all Australians who care about Australia's World Heritage Areas to contact their local TWS office and, more importantly, to write or visit their local Federal Member of Parliament. They can and will do something if enough people show they care.

• **Canoeists for Conservation.** The Australian Canoe Federation has publicly declared its support of the 'Save the Franklin' campaign and its belief that as much of the South-west as possible should be preserved.

• **Expeditions.** The Australian and New Zealand Scientific Exploration Society (ANZSES) is planning another expedition to South-west Tasmania, for January 1983.

The fifth in a series of annual five-week ex-



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## PADDYMADE SLEEPING BAG COMPARISON CHART

MODEL	WEIGHT INC. STUFF SAC.	CONSTRUCTION	FILL WEIGHT	FILL	TEMP. RATING*	ZIP	SIZE IN STUFFSACK cm
KIANDRA	1.25 kg	Sewn Thru	500 g	550 Loft Down	5°C	Full Zip	30 x 17
BIMBERI	1.00 kg	Box Wall	550 g	550 Loft Down	-5°C	Side Zip	30 x 17
HIGH PLAINS	1.80 kg	Box Wall	1100 g	Featherdown	-5°C	Full Zip	34 x 23
HOTHAM	1.60 kg	Box Wall	700 g	550 Loft Down	-5°C	Full Zip	34 x 23
MELALEUCA	1.55 kg	Box Wall	800 g	550 Loft Down	-15°C	Side Zip	34 x 23
BOGONG	1.60 kg	Box Wall	900 g	550 Loft Down	-15°C	Full Zip	34 x 23
SNOWLORD	2.00 kg	Slant Wall	1100 g	550 Loft Down	-25°C	Side Zip	37 x 27

All bags fit people to 190 cm (6ft 3in) tall; bags to fit people 205 cm (6ft 9in) are available in most models.

\*Temperature Ratings are a soft measurement — they represent an average expected performance level for a standard person although individuals will differ by up to  $\pm 10^{\circ}\text{C}$ . Paddymade reserves the right to alter these specifications without notice.



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peditions which commenced in 1977 in South-west Tasmania, the 1983 expedition is open to fit young Australasians aged 17-22 and interested in scientific research in wilderness areas. This expedition will be to the Franklin and Gordon Rivers.

• **Sinking to New Depths.** A new Australian caving depth record has been set with the discovery of Ice Tube cave below Mt Field West in Tasmania's Florentine Valley. Brothers Stefan and Roland Eberhard, Trevor Walls and Nick Hume of the Tasmanian Caverneering Club and the Southern Caving Society have reached a depth of over 300 metres and are still going.

This major breakthrough is one hour's walk from Growling Swallet, for 20 years Australia's deepest cave. More recently this title was held by Khazdum also in the Mt Field West area.

*Bill Nicholson*

• **More Hillary Lectures.** Hot on the heels of son Peter's Australian lecture tour are father Sir Edmund's lectures in four eastern capital cities in mid-September. The lectures, using both slides and film, cover Sir Edmund's adventure-packed life from 'before Everest' to the present.

• **Milford Marathon.** Local New Zealand publication *Mountain Scene* reports that 39 runners ran the 54 kilometre Milford Track in April.

Starting from Sandfly Point at Milford Sound, all 39 runners finished the run which is believed to be the first organized race over the length of the Milford Track. The time taken varied from six hours nine minutes for Ross Bush of Christchurch, to just over eleven hours for the last person to reach the finishing point at Glade House.

The run was organized by the New Zealand Long Distance Runners Club which has organized similar events over the Heaphy and Whangapeka tracks.

• **New Zealand Walkways.** Use of public rights of way across private property is a privilege which many Australian bushwalkers have no doubt enjoyed while visiting Britain, but sorely missed upon returning home. However South Australia is leading a small revolution by providing for public access to private land, to ensure the continuity of the 800 kilometre Heysen Trail.

New Zealand took a bolder step with the Walkways Act of 1975. This set up a Walkway Commission and a system of district committees to put the Act into practice. The Commission comprises seven members, one of whom represents the Federated Mountain Clubs of New Zealand.

Walkways complement the existing network of tracks in National Parks and State Forests by providing access to other areas of public as well as private land, and enlarge the range of recreational opportunities available to New Zealanders and to overseas visitors. The ultimate aim is to establish a system of tracks which will make it possible to do a continuous walk from Cape Reinga to Bluff — from one end of New Zealand to the other.

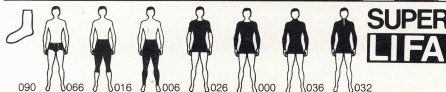
The Act also ensures that landowners through whose property walkways pass, receive legal protection.

Generally the walkways are open to pedestrians only, amenities such as picnic areas and accommodation, may be provided en route. Most of those opened so far are short — less than 12 kilometres, and close to

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cities and towns. The Cape Reinga to 90 Mile Beach Way, at the northern tip of the North Island, is much longer and requires at least one overnight stop. The tracks are not established merely for their own sake; each has its own intrinsic features of interest, such as the Ross Historic Goldfields Walk which is focussed on the goldfields opened in the 1865 rush to the west coast.

Perhaps we should start thinking about a track from Cape York to Wilsons Promontory!

Sandra Bardwell

• **1983 Palawan Expedition.** The fourth in a series of expeditions to identify and survey significant environmental features, the 1983 Palawan expedition will depart on 20 December 1982. Both four- and six-week options are available.

Palawan is the fourth largest island in the Philippine Archipelago, but its relative isolation and rugged terrain have caused it to remain primitive and undeveloped. Its unusual flora and fauna are of international significance, and much of its spectacular mountain terrain is little explored.

The Environmental Studies Association of Victoria and Associated Research Exploration and Aid have combined to continue the exploration of this island. The ultimate aim is to preserve the worthwhile areas through a system of National Parks and wilderness reserves. Both ecological and geographical exploration is planned.

Fritz Balkau

• **Himalayan News.** In addition to the Australian expeditions reported in our previous issue, Queenslander Fred From is teaming up with Peter Hillary and two others for an alpine-style attempt on the world's fourth highest peak, Lhotse; certainly the most ambitious extreme altitude climb tackled by an Australian. Another small expedition, including Melbourne climber Fritz Schaumburg, will be climbing on Pisang in the Annapurna region at much the same time.

Greg Child notes that the report in our fourth issue that Bill Denz made the first ascent of Kusum Kang was inaccurate. He says that this was the second ascent and that the peak is Kusum Kanguru. The sad news is that the 1982 British Mt Everest Expedition to China, attempting the first ascent of the east-north-east Ridge, without oxygen, was aborted when two of its members were killed, presumably in an avalanche. The two, Peter Boardman and Joe Tasker, were among the world's leading mountaineers.

• **Hot Air in the Himalayas.** From November, Sydney's Adventure Travel Centre will be operating hot air balloon flights on a daily basis from Nepal.

• **Alpine Successes.** Mark Moorhead and John Muir have had perhaps the most successful season ever enjoyed by Australians in the European Alps. In a few weeks they scorched up such routes as the North Faces of Les Droites and the Charnoz, the South Face of the Fou, the Gabarrou Route on Mt Blanc du Tacul and Mt Blanc's Central Pillar of Freney. Craig Nottle was scarcely less successful with ascents including the first Australian ascent of the fabled Dru Couloir, one of the harder European ice climbs.

• **Symposium.** The First Combined International Canadian Symposium on Alpine Rescue and its Medical Aspects is to be held in Banff, Alberta, Canada from 3-6 October.

New Guinea

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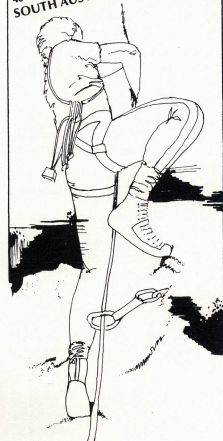
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# Getting Started

Putting the Best Foot Forward, with John Chapman



● FOR THOSE GOING WALKING FOR THE first time the only **essential** item needed is some good comfortable footwear. This will enable you to leave the roads and enter the bush on easy one-day walks and enjoy the great outdoors. However that pleasurable day can be turned into a period of agony and unforgettable blisters if the wrong footwear is chosen. What you choose to wear on your feet is the most important decision a beginner will make.

Go into any bushwalking shop and you will be faced by a bewildering array of footwear, ranging from cheap work boots to expensive imports from Europe and America. To confuse the issue further, each shop will have a different selection and every walker you question will recommend something different. Well, what do you choose? Choose the one that fits best from the range that is suitable for your general walking.

Why boots anyway? There are many practical reasons. Firstly, some ankle support and protection is required. This prevents the heel sliding up and down which can result in soreness and blisters. Secondly, a solid sole is needed to prevent stones and thorns from

damaging your tender soles. Boots usually have several layers in their sole construction that give some resistance to puncturing, and they are usually made with all leather uppers which protect the feet and increase the life expectancy of the boot. In addition, a good pair gives you confidence in placing your feet when in difficult terrain and this aids your enjoyment.

As boots are available in many different types what should you look for in your first pair? They are all made with different features, but the most important to consider are general stiffness and overall weight. So select a medium or lightweight pair; they will prove to be fairly comfortable and be easy to wear in. Heavy boots are not really necessary for most of your walking and are best avoided when starting. Other features such as sewn-in tongues, hooks, eyelets and foam padding are really unimportant compared to the fit. Minor features are often given undue importance by many walkers, resulting in a poorly fitting pair of boots that look smart or lace up easily. Don't go for fashion, let your feet do the choosing.

To fit a pair of boots is a fairly simple

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task. Put on a pair of thick walking socks, preferably those you intend to wear when walking. Personally I prefer a single pair of thick socks, but others prefer to use two pairs. If you have no particular preference I recommend that you use a single pair for flexible boots and two pairs for heavy rigid boots. Unlace the boot, place your foot inside and pull it back into the heel; the toes should not be touching the front. If all is well, lace the boot up firmly. Stand with your boots on and see how they feel; there should not be undue pressure across the top of the foot, the ankle should be firmly held and your toes must not touch the front. Now try to slide your foot forward as far as you can either by pushing forwards or, better still, by walking down some stairs. The toes must not touch; if they do, the boot is too short or possibly too wide for your foot. Also when climbing the stairs (or doing knee bends) the heel should not lift very much. It may slide up and down a little but if this movement is more than three millimetres the heel and ankle shape is incorrect for you.

Assuming that there are several pairs that are a suitable fit, then which do you choose? Try them all on, several times if necessary, and buy the pair that are the most comfortable; after all you will be wearing them for many hours at a time. When testing for size most people can feel when a boot is too small but have difficulty in judging if it's too large; so if you can, try the next smaller size before making your final decision. Unfortunately the only real test is to walk in your boots and even after obtaining a 'correct' fit it is possible that they are still uncomfortable. If this happens either wear them a little at a time, around the house and on short walks, or sell them to someone else and try another type. Once they have been used you will be unable to return them to the shop.

Now that you have a COMFORTABLE pair of boots please look after them. Don't dry them by the fire; this cracks the leather, shrinks it and shortens the life you could otherwise expect. To preserve the leather and keep it supple, your boots should be regularly treated with oil or waxes. I prefer the wax treatment such as Snowseal. This is liberally rubbed on with a cloth or your fingers then the boots should be left in the sun or a warm (not hot) place for the wax to soak in. Don't treat the boots every day you use them; do them when the leather begins to look a little dry. Note that it is impossible to make the leather completely waterproof. If you apply too much treatment they will still leak a little and the leather will become too soft, resulting in pulled out eyelets, excessive stretching and other problems all of which will shorten the boots' life.

Now, if you have absorbed all that I have written and have obtained some comfortable boots, go out and walk! ●

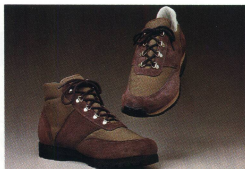
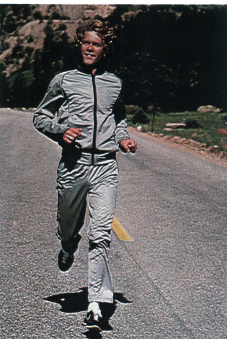
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# Contributors

**Stephen Bunton** has been caving for ten years. He has caved extensively in New South Wales and visited Tasmania's caves on numerous occasions. His quest for deep, sporting caves has taken him to New Zealand on three mini-expeditions and to Papua New Guinea as a member and organizer of the ATEA 78 expedition. This expedition succeeded in discovering the longest cave in the Southern hemisphere, the 30.5 kilometre Atea Kananda.

Stephen has also caved in England and visited caves in Malaysia and Nepal. He is currently involved in the MULLER 82 Australasian Speleological Expedition to Papua New Guinea. He has recently completed several successful climbing seasons in New Zealand, and is soon leaving for a climbing trip in Nepal. Other interests are rockclimbing, canyoning and cross country skiing.

**Peter Dombrovskis** travels Tasmania's wilds with a 4 x 5 large-format view camera, spending up to three weeks on each trip — walking, rafting or skiing. Closely involved with publishing and printing, he prefers large-format photography for its ability to resolve both fine detail and subtle gradations of tone. He was born of Latvian parents in Wiesbaden, Germany, but has spent most of his life in Tasmania and the past five years working full-time as a photographer-publisher. Each year he publishes a selection of his photographs in the *Tasmanian Wilderness Calendar* and is currently working on two books: *Last Wild Rivers* due for release in December and a long-term project on Tasmania's alpine flora.

**Dave Jones** developed an interest in wilderness activities through the Monash Bushwalking Club. He was on the club's committee for five years, mainly as equipment officer.

Since his university days he has worked, for five years, at the well-known Melbourne shop Nordic Ski & Backpacking, becoming an acknowledged expert on rucksack stoves.

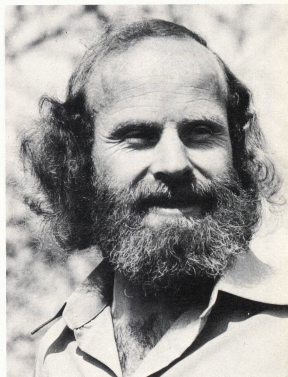
A self-confessed gear freak, Dave has, none-the-less, found time to get into the mountains for ski touring, walking

and canoeing. These activities have taken him to Nepal, where he has led treks to Everest and in the Annapurna region, and to the USA.

**Steve Pawley** became interested in bushwalking and other outdoor activities after joining the Melbourne University Mountaineering Club in 1973. Whilst completing his degree in veterinary science he took part in walking trips in the Victorian Alps and Tasmania, as well as rockclimbing and ski touring.

On moving to Perth in 1977 he established a veterinary practice and has continued his bushwalking, with the Perth Bushwalkers.

**Hugh Wilson** is a freelance botanist, and author of several books. Now based in Christchurch, he lived for many years at Mt Cook, and for the last five years has been involved in a detailed botanical survey of Stewart Island. A keen cyclist, skier and mountaineer, he has travelled New Zealand widely, and visited other parts of the world including Tasmania, North and South America, Malaysia and



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Your donation to the Tasmanian Wilderness Society for \$20 or more will get you a free copy of the magnificent book "A Time to Care. Tasmania's Endangered Wilderness" by Dr. Norm Sanders and Chris Bell. In the text, Dr. Sanders outlines the overwhelming arguments for the preservation of the South West Wilderness. While Chris Bell's superb photographs capture the breathtaking beauty of the deciduous Beech forests, the majestic snow capped peaks, the wild river gorges.

More importantly, your donation could also help save what's in the book - the Franklin River. Australia's last wild river. And the surrounding forest which is one of the last three areas of temperate rain forest in the world.

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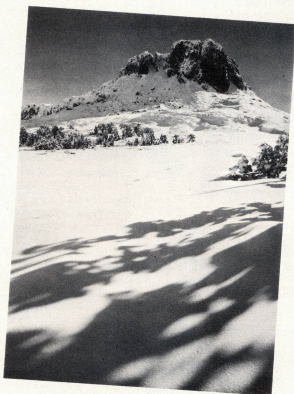
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## *A Time to Care*

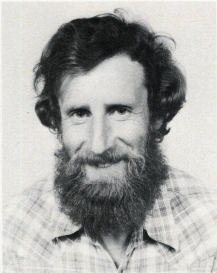
TASMANIA'S ENDANGERED WILDERNESS

BELL & SANDERS



some Pacific Islands. His latest book, a field guide to Stewart Island plants, is due to be published by the end of this year.

**David Yeoman** migrated to Australia from England in 1966 at the age of 18. After spending four years in Sydney working as a painter and decorator he became a student at Canberra CAE and began to enjoy the outdoors. He started with long distance bicycle rides, getting



a general look at the country and then became interested in bushwalking. He has visited Tasmania a number of times, as well as New Zealand and local regions such as the Snowy Mountains and Budawang. This year he started cross country skiing: pretty hard for a Porn, who came to Australia to get away from the snow!

David is an English/history teacher in the Australian Capital Territory and lives in a caravan on a small property which he and his wife are slowly trying to bring back to its natural state, that is trees not sheep!

# Canoe Survey

If canoeing is your special interest don't miss our Summer issue! On sale in-December, it will feature a special buyers' guide to canoes and kayaks commercially available in Australia and New Zealand. Manufacturers are invited to contact us about having their canoes and/or kayaks included in the survey.

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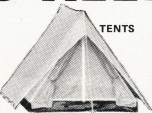


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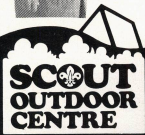
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CAMPING SPECIALISTS



# Kiandra



Klaus Hueneker takes you on a 100 kilometre winter journey from the ghost town of Kiandra to the snow plastered crags of the Main Range. Now the classic of long distance ski tours it was first travelled in 1927.



● A METRE OF SNOW AT KIANDRA — IT has solidified and sunk since the record falls of the previous week. Sparkling car roofs with mud splattered sides line the road. Yan's Store, the last vestige of the 1860 gold rush, groans under its leaden weight and the cemetery is isolated and forlorn. The small number of graves led some to advertise Kiandra as a healthy place to live. No one lives here now.

Ski tracks abound as we move off on hard pack with greasy icing. We glide to Four Mile Hut via the old Commissioners Gully track. First used by the miners of 1860 it follows the creek rather than the ridge. This is wombat country and we spy a mother and young waddling up a nearby ridge. Like cardboard cut-outs silhouetted against a soft plain background we become entranced by their stop-start pantomime and their rolling gait. Every so often there is a lurch as one foot sinks farther than all the others. The vignette passes.

Four Mile Hut is deep under snow and barely visible. We dig out the entrance, stoop down and lurch into the cool dark interior. Here we are surrounded by Bob Hughes' mining chisels, his 1937 calendar, books of the Watchtower Society and his collection of old bottles and rabbit traps. A swallow has nested

*Ted Winter at Wheeler's Hut, and above, Kiandra cemetery. All photos Hueneker*

# to Kosi



# Lowe Mountain Packs



## **Fitzroy**

**Volume:** 2400 cu in

**Dimensions:** 7 x 12 x 28 inches

**Weight:** 4 lbs

**Fabric:** 11 oz Cordura® or 8 oz Pack cloth with 11 oz Cordura® double bottom



## **Triolet**

**Volume:** 3400 cu in

**Dimensions:** 8 x 14 x 30 inches

**Weight:** 4 lbs 6 oz

**Fabric:** 11 oz Cordura® or 8 oz Pack cloth with 11 oz Cordura® double bottom



## **Expedition**

**Volume:** 4300 cu in

**Dimensions:** 8 x 16 x 30 inches

**Weight:** 8 oz Pack cloth-4 lbs 8 oz

11 oz Cordura®-5 lbs 2 oz

**Fabric:** 11 oz Cordura® or 8 oz Pack cloth with 11 oz Cordura® double bottom

Simplicity is the key to versatility with Lowe's mountain packs. The Fitzroy, Triolet and Expedition have large single compartments, top-opening so they are easy to pack. Compression straps let you adjust the volume to less than 1000 cubic inches (the size of a day pack). You

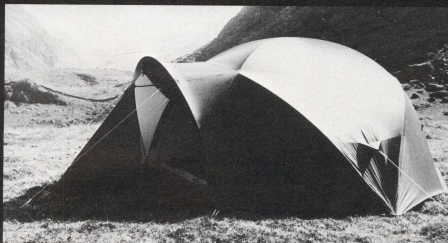
can also use them to carry pockets, skis, or other items on the outside of the pack.

The mountain packs ride on Lowe's Paralux® suspension. They adjust to fit your body as well as your load. On the approach, the frame comfortably supports your heavy pack. On the

climb, you move free and easy with only essentials on your back.



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**BRISBANE** Jim the Backpacker, Mountain Experience, **CANBERRA** Bushgear.  
**ADELAIDE** The Scout Shop & Outdoor Centre, Thor Adventure Equipment.  
**PERTH** Wilderness Equipment.

on top of an old kerosene tin. The last active miner of the high country, Bob and his brother Bill took part in the search for Seaman and Hayes over 50 years ago. Bill was the navigator on the first successful ski crossing from Kiandra to Kosciusko in 1927.

Off to Broken Dam Hut via the trenches of the Four Mile sluicing hole. We pass a half built snow shelter and its three occupants, exchange muffled greetings and contour round the top of Bloomfield Creek. Broken Dam is occupied and in late afternoon light we push on to Tabletop, Arsenic Ridge and Happy's Hut on the edge of the windswept Happy Jacks Plain. A forbidding, forlorn sort of place. Old Jack must have been a super optimist. So were the families of the men who worked on the Snowy Scheme. They had a settlement and school farther to the west under the northern end of Far Bald Mountain.

We breakfast on muesli, crumbling rye bread, protein rich egg and refined British tea. I had to get used to 'Earl



## Eons later we feel the outline of a hut.

Grey' or do without. 'Ocker' tea under the Bushells or Lan Choo label was a definite no-no. Much later I was to mix 'Ocker' with Lemon Scented Twinings and live happily ever after. The only solace on this trip were the BDM's (Before Dinner Mints) and the ADC's (After Dinner Chocolates).

We stop to wax after crossing the Happy Jack foot-bridge. The walk over ice encrusted logs is not easy and made even more insecure by a teetering hand rail. The alternative is to wade across bare up to the navel. Robbie Kilpinen who still holds the Perisher to Kiandra record had to resort to such indelicate masochism in 1964. He couldn't find the foot-bridge. Nor could Otto Pinkas and Kora Grunnsund a few weeks later. They nearly perished amongst flood propelled ice floes.

The 1927 party crossed farther to the west, where the Happy Jacks becomes a gorge, and then headed past Boobee Hut to Doubtful Gap and on to Farm Ridge. Mackeys, our next port of call, did not exist then. The beds at Mackeys are always seductive with or without feline company and for an hour or so we lapse into a delicious coma. It's four o'clock by the time we get skis on, six o'clock by the time we reach the ruins of Farm Ridge homestead and dark at the steep crossing of Bogong Creek. O'Keefes seems light years away. John mumbles something about a make shift camp, digging in, putting skis up and huddling together. He's brought a plastic tube to use as a tee-pee cover

round vertically placed skis. We resist a night out, trudge on in total blackness and eons later feel the outline of a hut.

O'Keefes Hut was built in 1934 during the height of the grazing era. In the dim candlelight we make out some old newspapers — pictorials of race horses, T-model Fords and so on, stuck to the walls. Now half peeled and soiled with grime they are disappearing fast. Tonight Karl treats us to a banana jelly. Did I say jelly? Even an hour on the snow doesn't help it set. We drink it instead. Sleep comes easily.

Up early today for the long steady pull up the northern flank of Jagungal. The slope of yesterday has frozen overnight and been lightly dusted with fine new crystals. Thousands of tiny mirrors bounce warm morning sun on to cold raw skin. Later in the day it will become unbearable. Meanwhile the summit draws us on — the mightiest of Bogongs has us mesmerized. Elyne Mitchell in her classic *Australia's Alps* was

Top, Brooks Hut on Happy Jacks Plain. Left, wombat tracks and Round Mountain. Above, wombat.

impressed by its nobility and strength and Ted Winter called it a 'Lion of a Mountain.' Here is part of his hymn of praise:

'It's the most remarkable mountain  
Of all those of the range  
And it dominates the landscape  
From Nimmo to Pretty Plains;  
From the Kerries to the Dargals  
And from almost every place  
No hill can take its limelight  
Or match its changing grace.'

The summit is almost without wind and under crystal clear skies we feast on all that is near and far. This is the centre of the wilderness hub, the magic axis from which we can follow many spokes to many destinations. Today our choice is Grey Mare Hut via Strawberry Hill and Straight Creek, tomorrow it's north-west to Pretty Plain and by the end of the week we'll be crossing the Valentine River and the Rolling Grounds. So we hope.

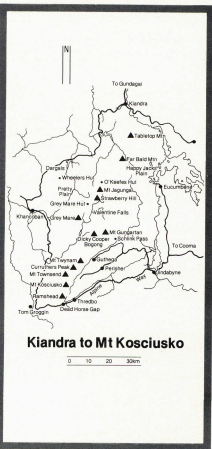
At Grey Mare the white carpet is marred by snow cat tracks; they took an injured skier out yesterday. Petrol fumes linger amongst the snow gums and the snow surface looks like a mock battlefield. We clatter over the frozen tracks, jettison packs and search for



water. The steam engine of 1949 is all but covered, only a few chunks of rust rise out of glistening snow. The journey to the mine tunnel and water is short in distance but long in time. Each leg sinks up to my buttocks and then has to heave itself upwards and forwards for the next sinking step.

A legendary day without H-frame,

John on the Grey Mare Range, and bottom, with Gerry at Pretty Plain Hut



with acclimatized lungs, on fine hard pack snow all the way down the Grey Mare Range to Grey Hill: we bank, carve and slide through minor gullies, open parallel round hummocks and telemark down smooth gentle bowls — nothing except gravity can hold us down. My mind is a white albatross, I am as high as a kite.

Grey Hill Cafe sits like a dolls' house amongst the steel grey spars of a forest of death. A fire came through here in 1972. The hut was rebuilt in 1977 for emergency shelter on a very exposed ridge. The door says 'pull here' — we do and drop a metre to the still grassy floor. Snow nestles amongst fireplace rocks, the only place where it has blown in. Fencing wire everywhere — to hang pots on the fire, to stabilize the roof, to connect the corner posts, to suspend a pack, to grill a fleshy chop or dry a smelly sock — I christen it the Wire Hut.

We start early for Pretty Plain. There is so much snow this year that the marginal valleys of the Tooma River will be covered. We ascend Grey Mare Bogong and shuffle across iron plate

## The mightiest of the Bogongs has us mesmerized.

snow. Then it's down, down through towering sky-grasping trunks of Alpine Ash along a steep narrow fire trail cutting. But control becomes hopeless and the pressure on ankles unbearable. We stop, unstrap and trudge on in silence. Packs off at the divide between the Pretty Plain Creek and Bogong Creek, skis on and a fast run to Findlays Lookout before lunch. My skis grip like daddy-long-legs spiders, and I shoot to the top. The view is blocked by trees except towards the Dargals, which loom dark and mysterious to the north. Now I wish I had my pack for a run to Wheelers along the Broadway Top. Back at the pass we hide in the shade for an afternoon snooze. My nostrils are flared and burning.

It's a bitterly cold morning, my aching muscles need warmth. I don't want to leave my warm cocoon of fluffly down. All the heat of the fire escapes into the vast roof space leaving us shivering and eager to get out and move. We lope down Bulls Head Creek and across the Pretty Plain. Here a wombat lies frozen in its tracks. I pen these lines the next day.

'Adapted he was to the blinding sun but the snow caught him on the run.

Some say they crawl away when old instead of dying out in the cold.'

Wheelers is the Shangri-la of the mountains and the jewel of the Kosciusko huts. Possibly built as long ago as 1910, it features a verandah back and front, beautifully detailed

slabs, a walk-in fireplace, a galvanized iron bath, home made sacking chairs and a grand view of Jagungal. One-Armed Will for whom the hut was built is said to have been able to ride at a fast gallop with the reins draped over the stump of one arm and a whip in the other. He never uttered the same oath twice.

A 'lay day' at last — the big thaw has hit. It has been raining since 2 am and we are enshrouded in heavy cloud. The lid has clamped down, yesterday's fine weather and all that new snow are things of the past. After six days on the go I am glad to be a prisoner in Pretty Plains' log walls. As if in support, a horse's bleached skull nods from above. Someone has stuck a pipe into its toothless gums and wrapped goggles around its white skull. Alas, the windowill bottles of muscat and brandy are all empty.

John and Gerry have just disappeared over the wall into the wood supply and Karl is reading the log book. His recitation of interesting snippets is occasionally drowned out by the rip, rip of saw teeth tearing through ancient snow gum. Staccato words and shredded timber fall to the floor in a mixed cascade of hut activity. One quote catches my ear:— 'A cow once wandered into Whites River Hut. The door closed behind it and without feed it died. I came across the bag of bones.' Ted Winter, the author, reminds us to always secure hut doors. Now the wind picks up and with its eerie howl drowns out all other sounds. I fear it will lift off the roof; with such big eaves it could easily happen.

It's out to Gúthega today, by hook or by crook and the boys mean it. Up at six, away by eight, up the valley in fog, sliding through six centimetres of new slush and slowly on to the Grey Mare Range. We cross the top in 'clag' — that horrible white stuff that always seems solid and impenetrable but melts upon contact. It opens in front of us and closes behind us, we are the passage in the hour glass. Our only hope for maintaining direction is a compass. Grey Mare Hut finally finds us.

Ten minutes' rest and it's off to find snow bridges across Straight Creek, the Rocky Plains River and the Valentine — by 2 pm we are done in and need food. Valentine Hut and its red hearts beckon but must wait. We slog on to Schlink Pass and heave ourselves on to the Rolling Grounds in blinding blizzard. I am exhausted and disorientated. Then in this God-forsaken lunar landscape the cloud suddenly breaks and we are pierced by a blinding ray of the sun. Silent tears embrace powerful beauty.

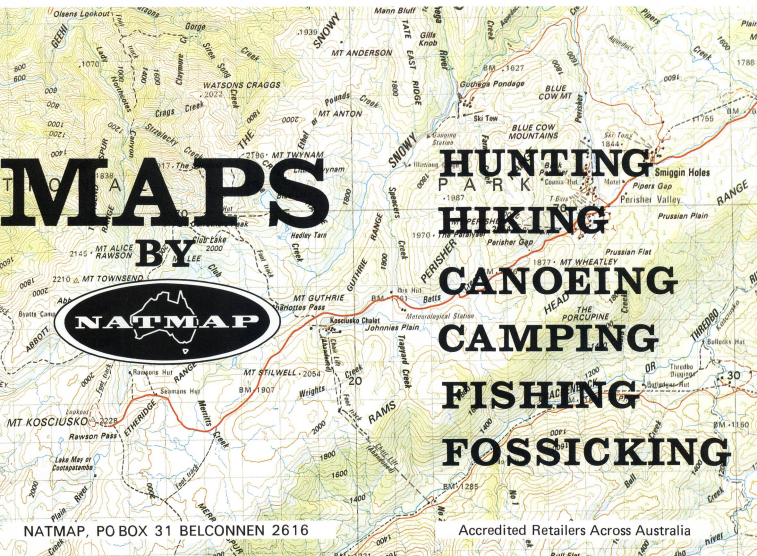
Are we past Conssett Stephens Pass?

Yes . . . OK down Gúthega Creek to the Snowy River — out by six. We have skied almost half of our eight day journey in one day. The mountains wait. ●



# Australian Rock

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# A Stirling Effort

Rugged and spectacular bushwalking on West Australia's prickly Stirling Range, with Steve Pawley.



● THE STIRLING RANGE IS A LONG chain of rugged peaks and forms the backbone of the Stirling Range National Park in the south-west of Western Australia. On a long week-end in winter, a group from the Perth Bushwalkers set off to complete the traverse from Bluff Knoll to Ellen Peak, in the north-east corner of the Park. We were looking forward to the challenge of a hard trip in rugged country with the chance that rough weather would really test our skill and determination.

After a 400 kilometre drive from Perth, we arrived late on Friday night and Judy suggested; 'How about climbing Bluff Knoll by moonlight?' About an hour later, after Geoff had loaded his pack, four of our group headed off in the bright moonlight and, at about 3 am, camped on a saddle below the summit. The rest of us slept until Saturday morning, when we set out from the car-park up the steep track to Bluff Knoll. We had a warm sunny morning for the climb and set a brisk pace through the bush until we emerged from the trees. Then we felt the sun's heat, and our heavy packs, on our shoulders, and realized that the walk had really begun.

As we climbed higher, a magnificent view of the western peaks of the Stirlings spread out below us. We scrambled up the steep rocky sections and the slippery gullies and caught up with the four moonlight walkers who were basking in the sun. We all strolled up to the summit of Bluff Knoll, at 1,073 metres the highest point in the south-west of Western Australia.

The large, flat Isongerup Peak was separated from us by the steep eastern side of Bluff Knoll, and we knew we didn't have time to linger. We headed east along a rough track till we came to an obvious saddle. The thick scrub towered above our heads as we pushed our way through and continued on over a ridge. The scrub was not so high there, but very prickly and we stopped to put on our long trousers. Only 'Leather Legs' Rob preferred to walk in shorts.

The track had disappeared, so using the towering mass of Pyungoorup Peak as a bearing, we continued on through scrub and rocks until we found an ideal spot for lunch, on some flat rocks, with the north face of Bluff Knoll in the background. After lunch, we went north and down a steep gully where we strug-

gled for secure footings in the thick scrub and loose rocks. The party moved in groups of twos and threes, pushing their way through and then resting to survey the next section. At times we lost sight of each other, but eventually reached a series of ridges which took us down off Bluff Knoll and then turned upwards again on to the slopes of Isongerup. Night was overtaking us, and the walkers were getting tired and spread out. Brian left his pack with us and went in search of water while we struggled up the slopes in the dark until we came across a level spot below Moongongoonderup Hill. The thick scrub was tramped down and the smaller rocks shifted to form tent sites. The sparse firewood was soon collected and set burning and dinner was cooking when Brian arrived by torchlight with some murky water.

Throughout the night, a fierce wind blew through the campsite, buffeting our tents as if some demonic force was trying to tear them from us. Geoff did the rounds about 4 am, fastening guy ropes and straightening collapsed tent poles. We greeted the dawn with bleary eyes and gladly packed our gear and continued on up Isongerup. The faint track was hard to follow but Isongerup towered above us and we pushed on through the dense bush.

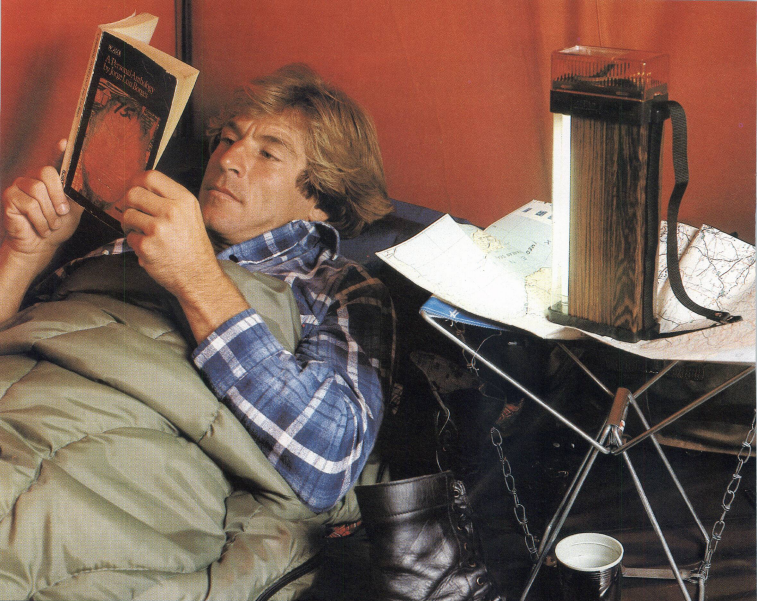
Judy found a slow trickle of water around a rocky outcrop and we collected what we could for our water bottles. We knew we would get no more water until the evening, but luckily it was a cool, overcast day. From the summit of Isongerup we could see the rocky peaks known as the Three Arrows which were our next objective. We headed down the eastern slopes of Isongerup and on the saddle before the first Arrow we had a late lunch in a well sheltered spot. It would make a suitable campsite, but for the lack of water.

The group was getting very spread out as we headed round the base of the first Arrow. The track followed the north side, close to the border of the rock and scrub and we slowly worked our way up and down the gullies and round the rocks. As we rounded a corner, a third

*Looking back on the third Arrow with Bluff Knoll in the background, and opposite, descending Bluff Knoll, with Isongerup Peak behind. Geoff Palfreyman*







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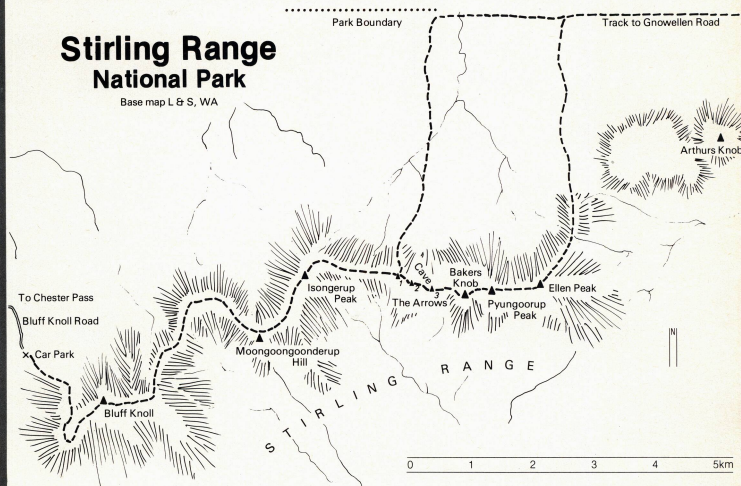
FLUROLITE





# Stirling Range National Park

Base map L & S, WA



Arrow and Pyungoorup came into view again, and a track led off to the north, down a steep spur. This was the Arrows Track which reaches the Park boundary via a firebreak. It has served as an alternative approach or exit from the walk, and on this occasion three of our party, who had been making slow progress, decided to take that way down. However, we gained Iris and George (plus his movie camera) who had walked up the track to join us.

We then climbed very steeply up to the top of the first Arrow, at times hauling ourselves up on saplings and wondering would we ever get to the top. At last we reached the summit to gain a well earned rest and a magnificent view of the area in the late afternoon sun. As we set off again George wanted to take some movies, but was told, 'There's no time to stop for movies'. His reply, 'It's getting too dark anyway', summed up our situation. We had to reach the water supply at the third Arrow by nightfall. Down on to the next saddle we went and then up again over the second Arrow. Darkness surrounded us as we headed for the third Arrow, and we split into two groups. One group collected firewood and hauled it up the cliff to a spacious camping cave on the northern side of the third Arrow. The rest of us took all

the water containers and scrambled up the slippery rocks into a deep cleft on the western side. Here, a large plastic drum had been placed years ago by an earlier party, and collected rainwater

**From the warmth of our sleeping bags, we gazed at the brilliant red sunrise.**

from the rocks. It provided the only sure water supply on the walk and we quickly quenched our thirsts and filled our containers. Clutching the precious containers in our hands, we slid back down to the track and found the camping cave by torchlight.

After spreading our gear around in the dusty cave, we soon had the fire burning and hot food on the way. The temperature dropped rapidly and we settled down for the night amongst the rocks. Again a strong wind blew up and finding no tents to attack, it whisked any unsecured pots and pans away into the gully below. On Monday morning we

awoke just before dawn, and from the warmth of our sleeping bags, gazed at the brilliant red sunrise. The warm sun coaxed us out of our cave, and after refilling our water containers from the drum, we braved the wind as we walked up through the large cleft in the third Arrow and over the flat expanse of Bakers Knob. We huddled out of the wind for a short rest then traversed round the southern side of the massive Pyungoorup Peak, with its overhanging cliffs towering above our heads. The track was becoming more obvious, but still narrow and slippery, and a few fingers were cut when people grabbed at the sharp sword grass for support.

We gradually moved out along a narrow ledge and then up and round a corner to the first glimpse of our objective, Ellen Peak 1,042 metres. Even from a distance it was obvious there was no easy way up, so we headed towards a gully and started the steep scramble to the top, where we had lunch and took in the view. We then followed the steep track down the rocky north side of the peak, until we reached the scrub and picked up the firebreak trail which led us out to the north-east corner of the Park. We reached the cars just as the sun was setting and a heavy downpour of rain began. ●





# Wild Interview

## Peter Genders

An Australian canoeing champion talks to Geoff Schirmer.

• It's predictable, but let's start at the beginning.

I was a member of a canoeing group at school in Tassie. We were attracted to competition canoeing at the age of 15 and 16, and gradually worked our way up the ranks, gaining experience at places such as Brady's Lake, which is recognized as having some of the best rough water in Australia. In between we spent just about every week-end on the many rivers that are within easy reach of Hobart when you are 17 and have your first set of wheels.

In 1977 a group of us decided to have a crack at the Australian Championships, being held that year on the Mitta Mitta. We were spectacularly unsuccessful and were left in no doubt that we had been kidding ourselves that two nights a week is tough training. So we increased our training to three or four nights a week, only to discover at the 1978 Championships in Perth that we were still not competitive, because all the top paddlers of the previous year had also increased their preparation.

The 1979 Championships were to be held in Tasmania. We now had far more information about training techniques, and even more commitment. We trained six nights a week, and also ventured into gym work. As a result, four or five Tasmanians were selected to join the Australian Team for the 1979 World Championships in Canada. I was unsuccessful, but it made me even more determined to make the team for the next World Championships.

Gradually things started to go well. I won the Tasmanian Wild Water Championships in 1979, and the Australian Championships at Cairns in 1980. An Australian team is selected for the World Championships every two years and in January 1981 the selections for that year took place at Nymboida. I did badly in the Australian Championships, coming ninth. But the next day, in the open International Championships, I came second, which got me into the team. It was by far the biggest thing that had ever happened to me.

I had a couple of bad accidents soon after that which kept me off training for a month with back injuries caused from hitting rocks. Things came good again in time for a trip to New Zealand. I went across as the Coach of the Australian Junior Team, as well as to compete in the New Zealand Wild Water Championships, which I won. After a couple of



*Peter Genders training on Melbourne's Yarra River. Photos Schirmer*

weeks back in Tassie, I moved to Melbourne in order to get in four weeks of training with Reg Hatch before heading off to Wales for the World Championships.

Reg coached the last Australian Olympic Sprint Canoeing Team. The training was very different to anything I had done before. I had a fair bit of volume work behind me, and now his refining work had me progressing in leaps and bounds. As well there was the stimulus of working with a large group, all of whom were training at very high levels. It was probably the best move I ever made.

From there it was off to Bala in Wales for the World Championship, and fourteenth place in the wild water event. It was the best performance so far by an Australian team. We didn't win any medals, but other team members also did well, and we feel that we definitely put Australia on the map. I stayed on for a few months, had a go at a couple of competitions in Germany and Italy, trained with some of the top British paddlers, took in some Austrian white water touring, and then returned to training in Melbourne.

**Can we talk about training? For example just how specific does it need to be?**

I would suggest that wild water canoeing is probably one of the most difficult sports to train for. You certainly need to develop power to be able to hold and control the craft in heavy water. You also need speed to be able to accelerate quickly at any time. And you need a lot of endurance. The average wild water event lasts 20 to 25 minutes over six to eight kilometres of water that isn't exactly placid. How do you go about training for that? You can build up

strength fairly quickly through appropriate use of weights. On the other hand it seems that conditioning for endurance requires long periods of continuous training over a number of years. And then there is the vital area of the development of skills and reflexes. I believe strongly that canoeing is still the best training for canoeing. Wild water or slalom canoeing is a highly skilled sport. As far as I am concerned, time spent in the canoe is worth twice that spent at the gym, or running, or swimming.

**How much training is necessary to be competitive in top-class events?**

It varies from individual to individual, and also according to the season. At the moment I am in the off-season, and I'm on volume work, which means 20 to 30 kilometres a day on the Yarra, together with running, cycling, or gym work, usually adding up to about three hours a day.

And that can raise quite a few problems. For example, it's very difficult to combine training with full-time employment. If you work all day there is the obvious problem of finding enough time for training. In order to get the necessary hours per day you end up chugging around the Yarra in the dark, bumping into trees and things. Runners at least have street lights to help out, but the Yarra is another story altogether. An even bigger concern revolves around the question of quality of training. If you work you are often fatigued at the end of the day and your training inevitably lacks quality. You do your best, but the level of sharpness required for competition these days virtually requires that you be completely free for training.

This is where the European paddlers have an enormous advantage. Many of their countries have what might be called a military sports unit. Their canoeists not only have the benefit of coaching



and financial security but also the opportunity to gain sufficient rest between intense daily training schedules.

To be fair, one must acknowledge the government assistance that is currently available to top Australian paddlers through the Sports Aid Program to compete overseas. I have much reason to be grateful for this assistance. But one can argue that some of this is wasted unless you've been able to train properly in the first place.

#### **How necessary is it to train overseas?**

There is a lot of base work that can be done right here in Australia, providing you can afford the transport to get to the best wild water. However, it is vital to be able to go overseas for a couple of months before a championship. There is the obvious stimulus of international competition, but it is even more important to have enough time to learn a championship course. You can't just go over a couple of weeks before and try to learn it quickly. You would then run the risk of being tired for the event itself. You need to know the course like the back of your hand, and that takes time, as well as plenty of mental energy.

#### **How good, then, are Australian rivers?**

They compare very well with overseas courses. Perhaps our biggest disadvantage is the distances between our rivers. Tasmania has plenty of world class white water. But there the problem is accessibility, since much of it runs through very rugged country indeed. We certainly have the water here to run a World Championships, especially in Tasmania. It's now a matter for the various States to agree on a site, develop it with adequate spectator and competition facilities, and then approach the International Canoe Federation. At the moment it's more a question of politics than a question of water!

#### **Can we move on to equipment? Just how exotic does it have to be?**

Different craft are required for wild water, slalom, and sprint/marathon events. Sprint/marathon craft have remained basically the same over a number of years, with the optimum design having been reached for the flat water on which these events take place.

It's a different scene with wild water craft. Designers continue to attempt to bend the rules as far as possible. Craft are now built specifically for the type of water on which a particular championship will be run. For example, the water at Bala in Wales was fairly shallow, technical, low-volume stuff, with the result that fast, narrow craft were designed just for these conditions. The next World Championships will be held at Merano in Italy where there is some of the biggest water that you could encounter on a championship course. You can be sure that highly specific craft have already been built just for this event.

You can imagine the problems that this can create for an Australian competitor. First we have to find out what is the most suitable design for a course, and then decide if we will make it here and fly it over, or get an overseas model. And then one has to have time to get used to it.

#### **Not to mention the subject of dollars?**

Yes, that's something else. A competitive wild water craft costs \$500-\$600. Then you also need a practice craft which will cost about half that. You learn the course in your practice boat, hopefully in the process hitting all the rocks you are going to hit, and then jump into your racing machine and hope you make it.

#### **Along with the development in canoes, has there also been an evolution in skills?**

There has been more development in slalom skills than in wild water racing techniques. However, there has definitely been a development in wild water touring skills. People are now doing things that would have been regarded as crazy a few years ago. In Europe people are shooting waterfalls, with sheer drops of up to 15 metres. In New Zealand a guy recently shot the Hooker Falls. This has partly been due to the development of almost indestructible polythene touring boats. People can shoot enormous rapids, with great potential for danger, because the boats are now made for the job and are so durable. It hasn't really hit us here yet. We still tend to be limited by our use of old slalom boats for this type of activity.

People are now doing things that would have been regarded as crazy a few years ago.

#### **What are the particular dangers of the sport?**

You can take chunks out of yourself if you capsize and start hitting rocks. Broken limbs would also be easy to come by in this situation, although I haven't seen many. There is great danger if you should get pushed under a log and held under. I think the greatest danger, though, is hypothermia. Let's face it, you are always cold, even in wet suits. It's a matter of being aware of the levels of coldness. Many wild water rivers are not easy to get out of. There are touring conditions in which you just have to keep going if you want to get out before dark. Probably the correct thing to do is to stop somewhere, get a fire going, warm up and rest. But often you keep going, and depend on each

member of the party to keep an eye on the others. It's a dicey situation if the whole party gets very cold.

#### **What is the wildest water you have experienced?**

Perhaps the hairiest thing I've ever been through was Cataract Gorge near Launceston. I've been on equally big rapids overseas, but in more suitable boats.

#### **Do you have any particular advice for beginners?**

I am very impressed by the beginners courses that are available in Victoria, and no doubt in other States. By far the best way to get into the sport is first to hire the necessary equipment, have a go at one of these courses, and then decide if you like it and what type of craft best suits your needs. Above all, beginners cannot expect to hop into a canoe and get their act together in just a few hours. In fact there is great danger in this approach. There are very specific skills that have to be mastered.

#### **Where does Peter Genders go from here?**

There are the Commonwealth Championships near Brisbane in September. Then, assuming I'm selected, the World Championships at Merano in Italy in June 1983. Looking further ahead there is the possibility of the Olympics in 1984. I competed in the Australian Sprint Championships at Westlakes in South Australia last March, and managed to be the first Australian home in the 10,000 metres, behind two Swedish guys, as well as gaining significant places in the K1, K2, and K4 events. As a result I am being encouraged to take on more sprint events. Sprint seems to be regarded as the elite event in canoeing. However, it will take a lot to drag me away from the constantly varying challenge and excitement of wild water events. In fact at the moment I feel a strong need to get back to Tasmanian white water.

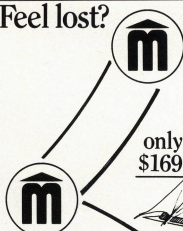
Meanwhile there is always the question of just keeping at it, to say nothing of the need to find ways to live and eat. I am very conscious and grateful for the support that various people have given me, and I particularly want to say how much I value the coaching, encouragement, and help that Roy Farrance has given me.

#### **And how long do you see yourself in canoeing?**

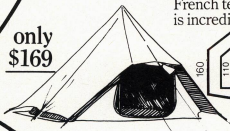
There are some young 17-year-old hot shots in Europe who are already doing phenomenal things. Guys like this, coming up through the ranks in any country, will be a continuing challenge to us 'oldies'. On the other hand one thinks of Jean-Pierre Burney of Belgium, four times World Champion, and still going strong at 37. And here in Australia one can think of Adrian Powell, who competed in five Olympics. I guess a guy had better just keep going until he is about 40, and then take things from there. ●

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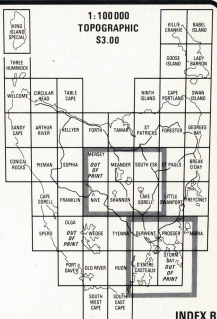
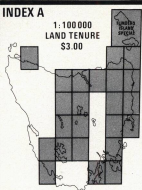
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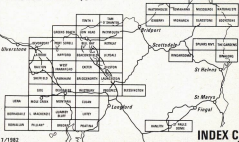
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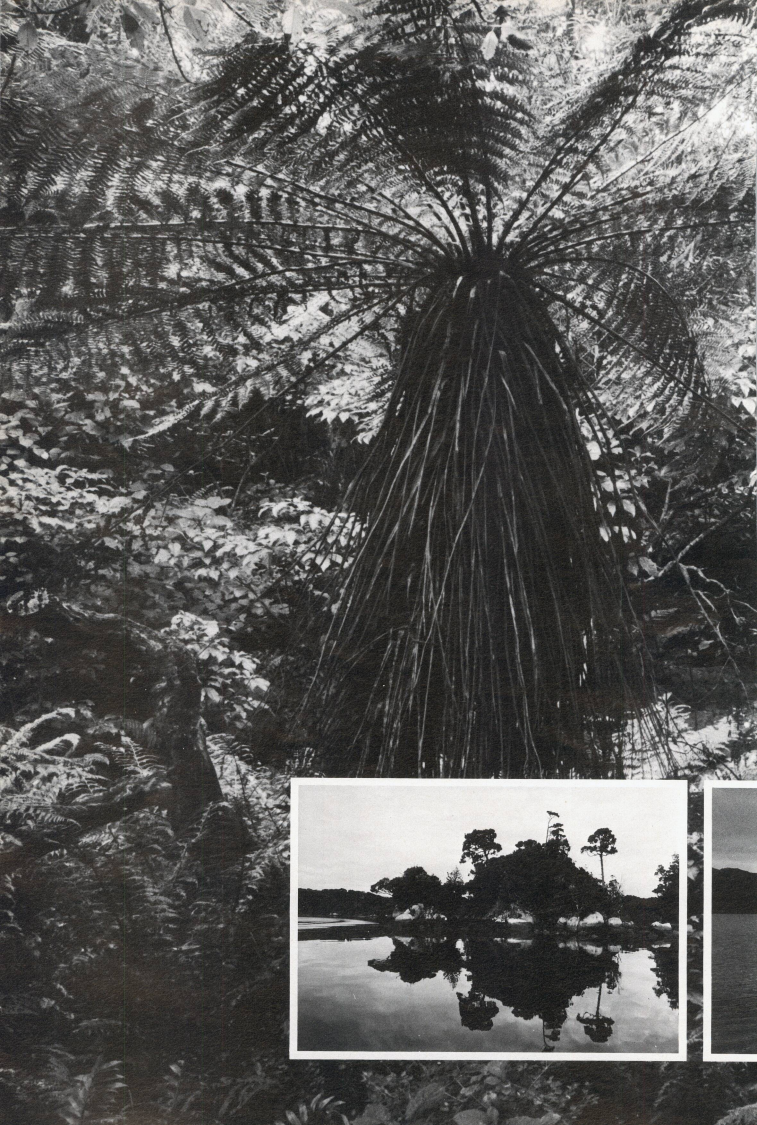
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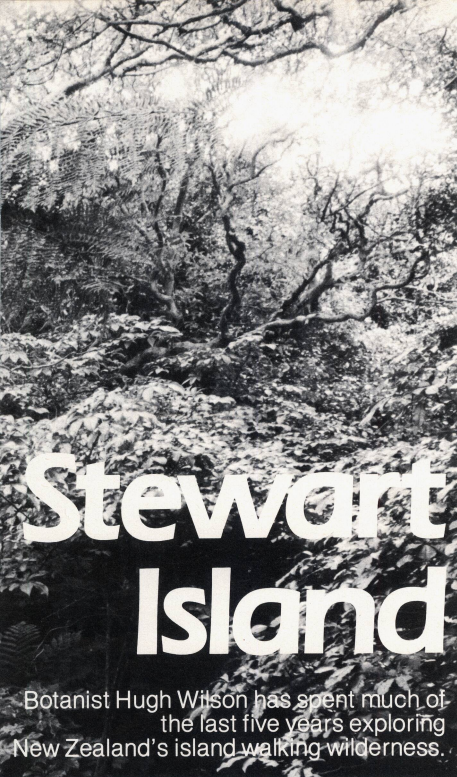


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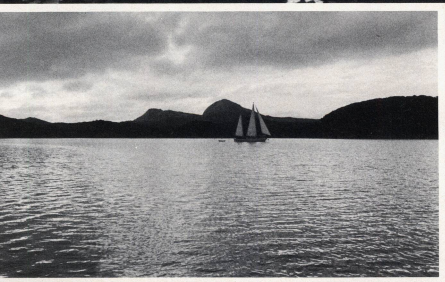






# Stewart Island

Botanist Hugh Wilson has spent much of the last five years exploring New Zealand's island walking wilderness.



● ON A MAP OF NEW ZEALAND, STEWART Island looks very small indeed, tucked away at the southern end of the South Island and surrounded by vast stretches of wind-worried ocean. But the world is a big place, and this apparent scrap of land contains a surprisingly extensive and varied landscape of hills and valleys, rivers, streams, lakes, plains, dunes and, of course, a long and intricate coastline.

About 60 kilometres long and 40 wide, the island is still mantled by a nearly intact cover of native vegetation. Much of this is temperate rainforest dominated by rimu (*Dacrydium cupressinum*) and kamahi (*Weinmannia racemosa*), with much rata (*Metrosideros umbellata*), totara and miro (*Podocarpus spp.*). The absence of beech (*Nothofagus*) is a curious feature of the vegetation related to patterns of recolonization after the last glaciation. Although ice occupied only small cirques on the highest mountains (about 1,000 metres), the climate overall must have been severe enough to denude the island of trees.

Even now it is by no means entirely forest-covered. A week's tramp would certainly take you through a lot of bush, but also into the sandy desert of big dune systems, through manuka shrubland on boggy plains, across wind-flattened meadows on open tops, or on to coastal cliffs of granite or diorite, fringed with surging sea-forests of bull kelp. There is true alpine vegetation along the highest tops, although snow is not very common. Dramatic granite domes and crags dominate the landscapes in the south. Throughout, much ground is hugged tightly by dense scrub, fascinatingly varied in composition for the botanist but unforgiving to travellers off the tracks.

This land is wild still, not because people have simply ignored it. Maoris have used these southern parts for a thousand years, attracted especially by mutton birds and a rich harvest of sea foods (*kai moana*). Europeans, with heavier hands, arrived in force by the early nineteenth century to exploit seals, whales, and timber; later they were attracted by cod, crayfish, tin, gold, and the prospect of farming. The seals were soon almost eliminated, tin was won in scarcely payable quantities, and the farming was largely defeated by poorly drained, infertile soils, and a less-than-ideal climate. Nearly all the 450 or so permanent residents of Stewart Island now live in one settlement at Halfmoon Bay on the north-east coast, and base their livelihoods on the sea. The hinterland is largely Nature's own, primarily so in many places, reclaimed by her in others.

Unfortunately human beings brought with them deer, opossums, rats and

*Ferns abound in Stewart Island's humid interior. Inset left, one of the many islets in the sheltered Port Pegasus, right, Paterson Inlet from Observation Rock, Half Moon Bay. Martin Heine*

cats which continue to have a serious effect on native plants and animals. Some palatable plant species have virtually disappeared except from mammal-free, offshore islets. The same is true of birds, but the situation is worse in that some species have gone forever. Others, fortunately, continue to thrive and Stewart Island is still a good place to see New Zealand birdlife. Indeed it must be the easiest place in the world to see kiwis in the wild.

I think the most appropriate way to go to an island is by boat. The *Wairua* crosses the strait from Bluff three times a week, on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, and for a few weeks in summer it travels every day. The two-hour crossing can be rough, and many visitors opt for the small plane which plies at least twice a day on unscheduled, 20-minute flights from Invercargill airport.

Two government departments administer most of the land, the New Zealand Forest Service and the Department of Lands and Survey. Both currently have similar policies centred on conservation and recreation; the last sawmill closed down in 1931. Unfortunately they are snarled up in a

pathetic and unproductive power struggle at the moment which dissipates some of their time and energy. However, this should not affect visitors who are likely to find both Forest Service and Lands and Survey staff friendly and helpful. There are moves afoot for a jointly operated visitor centre, so the underlying tensions and suspicions might abate with time.

When you come off the boat or the plane the Forest Service visitor centre is easy to find in the middle of the small town. Check in there for track and hut information. The rangers keep an 'Intentions Book' similar to those kept in National Parks. There has been talk of making all the crown-administered land on the island into either a National Park or a Forest Park, but the departmental cold war, and local opposition, has maintained the status quo. Meanwhile the place is run like a National Park in many ways. The huts are free, although in busy times (for a few weeks after Christmas especially) you would be well advised to carry a tent and stove. There are no restrictions to access on the main tracked routes in the northern and central parts of the island, although you

need boat access across Paterson Inlet to reach the east coast track to Port Adventure. Allow eight full days to travel the 'northern loop' from Halfmoon Bay back to Halfmoon Bay.

A few characteristics of Stewart Island tracks should be mentioned. One is mud; don't expect to return from the 'northern loop' with your feet clean and dry. Conditions underfoot are rather dramatically dissimilar from, say, the Blue Mountains in Australia, and strong boots are very desirable. After heavy or persistent rain long stretches of track, especially on the Ruggedy-Freshwater Flats, can be inundated; on occasion you may have to wait a day or detour via Mason Bay. Another feature is the propensity of Stewart Island tracks for going up and down over every ridge and gully they can find; at least that is how it seems at times. Yet another is hookgrass — really a genus of sedges called *Uncinia* which is represented here by a large number of species and a vast number of individuals. From mid-summer to autumn they hang their ripe seed heads over the track and grab at passing hairy legs and socks which are soon shimmering with the hook-tipped seeds. They are more a nuisance than a pain, not as bad really as the sandflies (in the daytime) and the mosquitoes (at night). Take repellent if biting insects bother you.

Wide areas in the northern hinterland and in the south, including the route to Port Pegasus along the Tin Range, are fauna and flora reserves to which access is restricted. For entry to these areas you must apply to the Reserves Ranger, PO Box 18, Stewart Island, for a permit. This is unlikely to be withheld, but the ecology of much of this land is so vulnerable, and the value of some of its wild inhabitants so high, that the Department of Lands and Survey must reserve the right to restrict numbers if necessary. At present this is not a big problem. Few parties head off into the wilderness proper, and some that do have their plans drastically curtailed by weather.

It is easy to treat the Stewart Island wilderness too lightly on a first encounter. The hills are not high nor the distances great, and in good weather the land appears compact and benign. But there are difficulties — with thick vegetation, with direction (a compass is essential), with subantarctic wind, fog and rain which roll in from the south and west with chilling and demoralizing speed.

For all that, the rewards are great. Stewart Island is not dramatic in the way the Southern Alps are, for example, but it has a lot to offer in terms of wilderness and wildlife, off or on the tracks. In many ways it is a fragment of an old New Zealand that has vanished from much of the rest of the country, down to the last details of snuffling kiwis and bush-girt shores. ●





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# Down Under Downunder

Tasmania has Australia's deepest and wildest caving: Stephen Bunton shares his experiences.



● I FOUGHT TO FIND A FOOTHOLD, swung across to stand on it and removed my Jumars. I was off . . . up the last of KD's waterfall pitches. Rather soaked, I had only to wade several hundred metres upstream and then it was the last series of dry shafts which led to the entrance of this cave . . . Finished yet again with Australia's deepest cave. (No longer: see Wild Information. Editor's note.)

The caves of the Australian mainland are tame compared to those of Tasmania. The small island is the most alpine of the Australian States. Its steep relief and high rainfall are ideal for cave

*Abseiling through water in a Kazadum streamway pitch, and above, flowers of calcite formation in Genghis Khan cave. All photos Bunton*

development, but this means the caves are wetter and colder than most on the mainland. They offer a new dimension to caving and are a great challenge to explore. Tasmania boasts the longest cave, the deepest cave and also the most beautiful caves.

Exit Cave at Ida Bay in the south of the State is Australia's longest cave with 17 kilometres of explored passage. The cave is quite large, resembling a huge railway tunnel which channels a stream right through a limestone mountain. The stream flows into Entrance Cave and out by way of Exit Cave but it is the side passages that give the cave its vast length. Several shaft systems join the cave from the surface of the mountain high above the main cave

passage. One of these, Mini Martin, was once Australia's deepest cave and still holds the distinction of containing the longest underground pitch (100 metres) in Australia. The other is Midnight Hole which drops into Entrance Cave in six easy abseils, the longest being 60 metres. Eye-bolts have been placed at the tops of the pitches so that the pitches can be double-roped. By taking two 60 metre ropes, the cave can be explored as a through trip in true canyoning style.

Kazadum (KD) is Australia's deepest cave with a depth of 320 metres. It is

A soaking is assured.

just one of the many deep vertical caves in the Junee-Florentine area near Maydena in Tasmania's South-west. Other deep caves include Tassy Pot which wrestled the Australian depth record from Mini Martin, only to lose it to KD. It may reclaim this distinction as a result of recent discoveries, as yet uncharted. The Chairman is a cave of impressive dimensions. Its entrance shaft is 30 metres across and plunges 88 metres into the eerie unknown. It was discovered later than the other caves in the area and the thought that such a monster had been overlooked inspired its name — it 'presided over all current matters'. Cauldron Pot has by far the most imaginative name, conjuring up visions of what might be contained inside. The roar of its 50 metre entrance shaft can be heard long before it is viewed. The cave swallows a large stream which disappears into the dark depths of Australia's second deepest cave. The bottom of the cave can be reached only after negotiating one of the wettest, most sporting pitches (30 metres) in the country.

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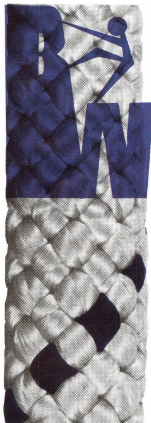
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*Crawling up low stream passages in Growing Swallet cave. Such passages can fill to the roof during sudden floods.*

Kazadum, however, is the ultimate Tasmanian cave. It overshadows all of its neighbours not just because of its record status but also by virtue of its serious, sporting nature. It is another cave that has swallowed a stream, the first section of which may be avoided as the caver follows a dry passage that the river has abandoned in its erosive quest for a steeper, faster path to the point where it will once again see daylight. Alas, after dropping down pitches of ten, 15, 30, 10 and 25 metres respectively, the river is once more encountered and there is no escaping the flow! It is followed for several hundred metres before it begins to descend in a series of short waterfalls. There are six in all and although none is greater than ten metres high, a soaking is assured. The final drop to the bottom of the cave again avoids the water. Luckily there is a dry 50 metre pitch as an alternative to the tiny swirling hole the river flushes itself through at the top of such a large drop. Prussiking up such a drop, in extremely cold water, would increase greatly the chance of suffering hypothermia.

All the vertical caves are best explored by using Single Rope Techniques (SRT) which involves the use of abseiling and prussiking systems. Care must be taken in the rigging of the rope

down the pitches. It is best if they hang free to avoid any risk of rope abrasion, or at worst that they are padded with a rope protector. Ropes should be hung out of the waterfalls wherever possible to minimize the risk of hypothermia. In this style these caves can be bottomed, rigged and de-rigged by a competent party in 12 hours.

One of the most interesting ways to do KD is as an exchange trip through its

## The caves of the Australian mainland are tame compared to those of Tasmania.

other entrance, Dwarrowdelf. The two caves join in the final chamber above the terminal lake or sump. The route down Dwarrowdelf is via five long drops, one after another, with almost no cave passage between them, only small ledges. The last pitch is the longest at 70 metres.

In the north of the State the Mole Creek area has some of the best river caves, although the area could not be considered a vertical system. Mole Creek itself flows underground for most of its length, through a series of caves

that include Herbert's Pot, Wet Cave, Georgie's Hall and Shishkebab. The caves of this area are very well decorated and two, Marakooa and King Solomon's Mine, have already been opened to tourism. This is an unlikely fate for the three best, Kubla Kahn, Genghis Khan and Croesus Cave, which still remain as wild caves.

The features of Kubla Khan are named from the poem by ST Coleridge and include the spectacular Pleasure Dome. This chamber has its floor totally covered in a series of orange calcite pools arranged in large terraces as far as a caver's faint light will illuminate. The Opium Den contains many crazed crystal formations growing from and covering the roof. Such formations make the nearby Genghis Khan famous. The most impressive feature in the Mole Creek caves is the Khan itself. Kubla Khan is the name given to a 20 metre high stalagmite, from which the whole cave takes its name. It is a pity that Croesus Cave doesn't contain such a spectacular single showpiece. If it did it would certainly be Australia's prettiest cave. Though small in size the outstanding beauty of its decorations contribute to its great reputation.

For those cavers tired of the crowds and boredom of the everyday mainland area, I suggest a visit to the caves of Tasmania. Their variety, beauty and challenge makes such a visit a worthwhile cave experience. ●

● HISTORICALLY, EL CAPITAN, INDEED Yosemite Valley itself, represents a yardstick in the development of modern climbing. When the climbers of the 1950s began to seriously consider the major features of Yosemite it became clear that new methods and equipment would have to be devised. Technical climbing was in its infancy and the climbers became the inventors in a field that was high in possibilities but low in technology.

Certainly the other walls of the Valley were climbing achievements in their

and ledges was refined to the 'sky hook', which makes even the tiniest rugosity usable. Nuts and wedges came, and more recently, a remarkable gadget made of spring loaded cams, the 'Friend', has further assisted climbing. And these items for the most part sprang from Yosemite.

This ever evolving state of climbing and its associated hardware has become reflected in the walls of El Cap. Line after line fell and each one seemed to be a new chapter in difficulty, as climbers plumbed the unmapped ex-

posed a rhino's back, jumping about, acting important. But the rhino scarcely gives them a thought, and with a mere shrug sends them flapping.

Now I've been accused by my friends of having a love affair with El Cap these past few years, and since all love affairs are of an indulgent and obsessive nature I, of course, wanted at least a part of her for myself. Other routes I'd repeated on El Cap had produced excitement and challenge, but always I'd felt envious of those who'd been there first, who'd felt out the way and pushed their minds and bodies to the limit.

The plotting of a new route on El Cap traditionally takes place from on one's back in the meadows. If you look at a wall long enough you may find something to climb, and if you look at that long enough you might climb it. A route or 'line' occurs when enough flakes, cracks, and ledges connect to form a natural path to the top. While blank sections are crossed by drilling for bolts or rivets, this alone does not constitute a route; if it did an 'unnatural' 1,000 metre line of bolts could appear every three metres on any wall or mountain, a pointless exercise that would be ugly and horrific in terms of time and effort. Binoculars help to pick out such features and when these run out colours tell the story. The multi-hued walls of El Cap are composed of many kinds of granite, each colour indicating a texture that can be interpreted by the climber who, from experience, is familiar with these signs.

For example, steep orange rock is generally blank, whereas black diorite can nearly always be said to be rich in tiny flakes and grooves. Dark brown streaks and ripples often contain quartz dykes and crystals, likewise rich in features, while white or pale grey rock tends to fracture sharply when it is at all featured.

It was with a lot of imaginative staring, and not a little wishful thinking, that Peter Mayfield and I visualized a line on the overhanging East Face. We planned to follow an existing route, The Tangerine Trip, for three pitches to a point where that climb traverses right under a huge arch, a point where we would climb left for 60 metres to an untouched line of weakness. In the autumn of 1981 we humped to the base enough food, water and equipment for a ten-day climb and set off.

Climbing walls is by nature a slow business, and climbing new ones even slower. For a start the type of climbing, aid climbing, is a process by which you hang off a piton or similar gadget, supported in an etrier or a little sling ladder. Stretch as high as you can, place the next piece, clip it, hang, and repeat the process. Each placement is different



own right; Sentinel, Lost Arrow Spire, Half Dome. But El Cap, the tallest and most awesome was indeed the prize. Not only were great physical and technical difficulties to be overcome, but also an aura of the impossible had to be penetrated.

This barrier was broken in 1958, with the first ascent of The Nose. Sieged over 17 months, its completion proved, among other things, that necessity is the mother of invention. New ideas, some verging on the crackpot, others practical, were put to the test, such as the Dolt Cart, a wheeled cart for hauling gear up the wall, an invention that never did catch on. On the more pragmatic side, when confronted with a 65 metre long fist-sized crack that proved too wide for any piton, they returned to their workshops and fashioned the right sized item from the steel legs of wood burning stoves. To this day that section of the route is known as the Stoveleg Crack.

In the years that followed, refinements and developments continued with the increasing attention given to big wall climbing. Pitons were made from harder and stronger steels, thin enough to fit a hair line crack and as wide as today's four inch 'bong'. A modified meat hook used to hook flakes

panes of granite. Well, those innovative and unmapped days are all but over. The equipment is there for the buying and the guidebook tells where the routes go. Progress has its side effects even in climbing.

El Capitan enjoyed millions of years of solitude after the glaciers exposed her granite flanks. Then midway through the twentieth century the first visitors came, treading gingerly. For 20 years the visitors were few, the new routes fewer, and the respect and aura accorded to El Cap, awesome. Then in the mid-1960s a real estate boom on the walls produced some 40 routes and, without detracting from any repeat ascent, the spirit of discovery on that wall was all but lost.

What was it then that happened to El Cap? It wasn't just that most of the big routes were done by the late 1970s and that a guidebook was out. It wasn't that climbing increased in popularity or that climbers were better. What seemed to happen overnight was that the aura surrounding El Cap was dispelled. She let her defences down and we all climbed out the mystery in her.

But even so, she's not really the worse for wear. Her aura is in our minds, not hers. Climbers are like the tickbirds

*Thrust and dangle: exiting from the cave, and opposite, Child clearing the ninth pitch in an airy situation. Photos Child, and opposite, Peter Mayfield*



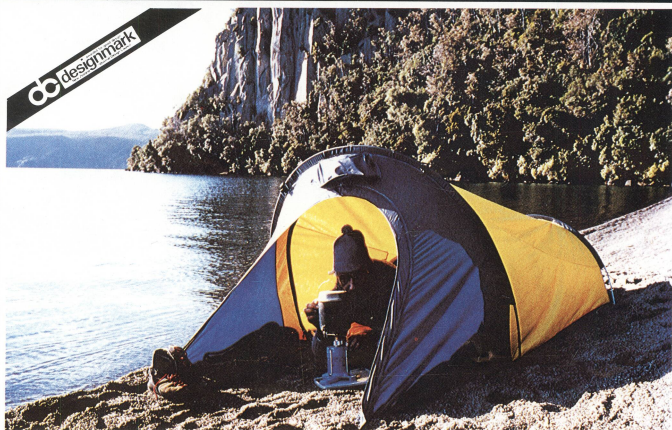
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Above: The new Chrysalis tent in use on the shores of Whanganui Bay, Lake Taupo — photo Graeme Dingle.



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and, at times, may be no more than a wafer of steel gently tapped into a crack a few millimetres. Concentration and patience are of the essence. So it was no surprise to find ourselves ascending a mere one or two pitches a day.

The first day involved hauling our 100 kilograms of gear to the top of our ropes where the virgin ground began. Despite the fact that we hauled this in two equal loads through a pulley to give a mechanical advantage, it remained to the end a backbreaking task that never grew easier. We followed the arch left, slamming pins up into it, till it opened up into a huge bomb-bay chimney. To all appearances from below, we had disappeared, swallowed by the rock. A cave-like alcove at its end capped by a large roof became our hanging home where we spent the night in Porta-Ledges. A more comfortable solution to sleeping on walls than the hammock, a Porta-Ledge is a collapsible alloy frame with a tightly strung nylon sheet that forms a cot when suspended by its nylon straps.

Over the next two days our route began to fall into place even better than we had hoped. Sections that appeared blank turned out to be subtly featured. Peter led out of the cave, through bulging overlaps, past a crack inhabited by shrieking bats, who along with the swallows, frogs, toads, moths and mice that live in the deep cracks and ledges of the walls, reminded us that we were never alone. El Cap may appear to be a granite desert, but soaks of water squeezed out to the surface sustain tiny oases of moss and plants that form ecosystems even on the vertical.

The next lead involved a series of scallops that were too shallow to drive a piton into but would accept copperheads. These are, as the name suggests, a piece of malleable copper crimped on to a wire sling; when pounded they will soften and stick to the nooks

a rivet, tie it off and hang on it. But not a single hole was needed as delicate features appeared, revealing themselves only when I came face to face with them. This was the stuff, I thought to myself, this was what we were there for. My mind was rapt and for the moment this was all that there was; two flies on a wall hunting out a path. Some people may think that climbing is a sort of forced entry, a violation, a pounding of spikes and a smashing of the rock, beating it into submission. But here I felt that I wasn't doing anything that El Cap didn't let me do. Every move and placement flowed as naturally as the stone that accepted it.

Peter Jumared up, cleaning the pitch and we returned to our ledge, leaving the ropes fixed above us. The evening star flickered into life and the air turned crimson with dusk. Suddenly a wild scream and a whoosh cut through the twilight. What the hell? Parachutes! One after the other, eight dots hurtled down for 600 metres then jerked upwards as

*'Drilling, hooking, traversing, jiggery-pokery'; Mayfield at work on the overhanging and apparently blank eleventh pitch. Child*

their 'chutes flew open to float them down like feathers to the meadow below. So now they take running jumps off El Cap; I suppose they crept in one night when she let her aura down.

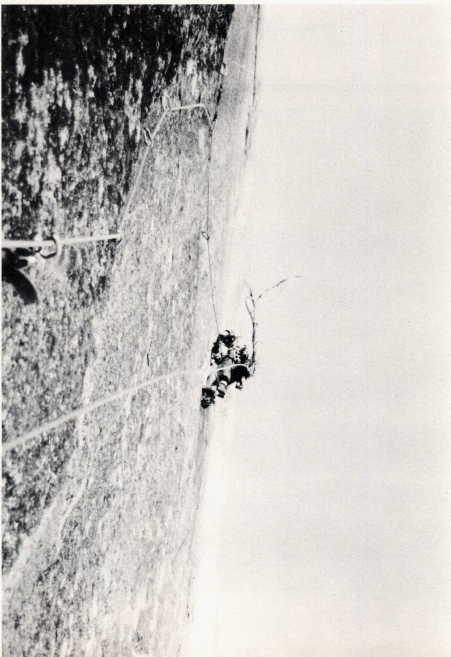
Day six and Peter carefully negotiated a flake that expanded as he pounded pitons into it; expanded so much that his placements wobbled limply behind him as he gently tapped on a higher piton. I stared boggle-eyed at the flapping guillotine poised above my head and nearly jumped out of my skin when a whoosh and a blur swooped by to my left. Not jumpers this time, but haul bags, barreling to the scree below, thrown off as is sometimes the custom, by climbers who'd just topped out.

Setting up our Porta-Ledges on the seventh afternoon we talked about how smoothly the climb had gone. With about four pitches left, we knew that it was in the bag and that in a couple of days we would have our own piece of real estate on El Cap. Both of us had tasted that feeling of isolation and acute awareness on our leads and for a week now we had been a self-sufficient microcosm, drifting up the wall, scarce-

I've been accused by my friends of having a love affair with El Cap.

and crannies of a seam. Being so soft they only take body weight, a fall would rip them straight out. I moved cautiously from one to the next till several hours later I reached a welcome ledge, mentally and physically drained.

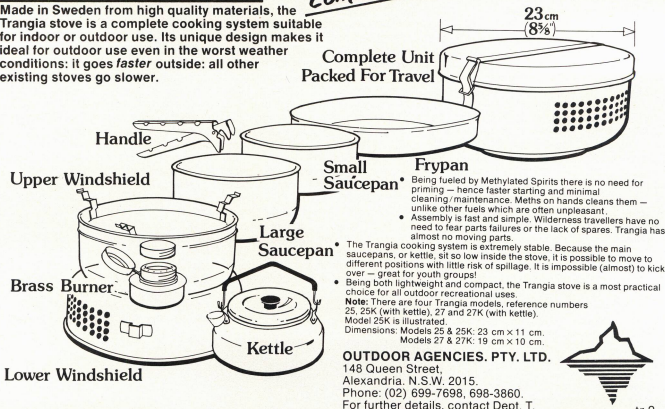
The following morning Peter free climbed for 20 metres to a red tower, then began hooking across diorite flakes to a stance barely big enough for our feet. Above us was the most barren looking section of the climb. Should the rock turn blank we would have no choice but to break out the drill; hammer and twist, hammer and twist till a quarter inch hole is punched out. Tap in



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
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ly aware of the rest of the world. From our bivouac on the headwall that leaned out at an angle of 120°, we had a panoramic view of the acres of granite around us, with the symmetrical baseline curve beneath us and the High Sierras rising above the valley rim.

But the longer we looked the more our feeling of isolation receded. To either side were teams on other routes; Dawn Wall, Mescalito, Zodiac. Acres away, yet their voices amplified in the afternoon calm. And the longer we looked the more the activity increased, until we were no longer on El Cap, but on some crowded city street. A rope the length of El Cap snaked slowly down the wall, lowered from a tripod and winch for some daredevil to abseil in space, a stunt never to eventuate, as the rope fell whip-cracking to the ground, narrowly missing a crowd below. Then more shouting and soon the air was filled with blasting megaphones and the eerie sound of helicopter blades whipping up the dusk. Someone had taken a fall on The Dawn Wall and was injured. As the helicopter hovered close by to ascertain the situation, the curious peregrine falcons, roused from their eyrie on the wall, flew rings round the intruding machine.

Lying back in our ledges like the tourists below on their deck chairs, we snacked and viewed the spectacle. Removing the stricken climbers posed an interesting problem. Three hundred metres from the top and every bit overhanging, they would be no easy job for the rescuers. Various hypothetical solutions had been dreamed up, such as

lowering someone down, dangling in space, with a line gun to shoot to the injured party. While sounding good in theory, this would more likely result in the harpooning of the unfortunate team.

The solution came next morning. The Mescalito team would traverse the void between the two routes and assist them to the top, a manoeuvre accomplished

I reached a welcome ledge, mentally and physically drained.

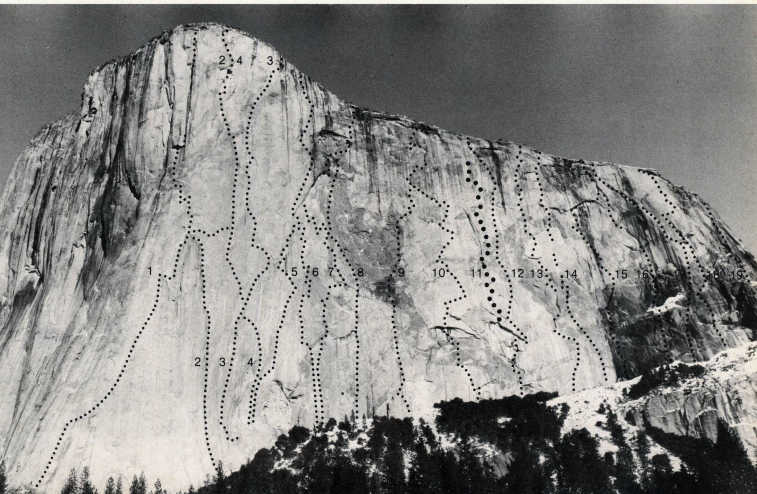
by two days of yelling and shouting. During this time Peter led across a blank traverse, interspersing rivets with hook moves till we rejoined the last of The Tangerine Trip, which led us quickly to the top of what we came to call Aurora.

Before we began the walk down to the valley floor on legs still wobbly after nine days on an overhanging world, I looked back down the shiny beast one last time. We had blazed a trail through a wilderness and even though our only marks are a few rivets and bolts, it will never be the same again. We, like other climbers who had found a new way, like the explorers who had left the first footprints in the Himalayas, the wilds of Alaska and other remote regions of the earth, were guilty of a small and incurable imperialism. The urge to be the one to leave those first footprints, to go where no others have been, is precisely

what will eventually kill the wilderness, because that is what opens up the path for others. We all have an inalienable right to these rare places, whether they be a new route on a wall or a journey into the tundra, but as the popularization of the wilderness experience catches on, the aura of the once impenetrable and the uncharted falls.

That night, before dropping into a deep sleep I remembered the tale of a lighthouse keeper who told his friends how beautiful and peaceful it was out there, alone by the sea in his lighthouse, far from the madness of the city. So a few people tried it, going off in ones and twos, manning lighthouses on isolated stretches of coast and finding a strange satisfaction in the simple quiet. And the idea began to catch on. The lighthouse keeper saw other lights in the distance, getting closer and closer till his view of the sea was strangled by the towers of those he had encouraged. What we have here, he said sadly to himself one night as he extinguished the candle of the lamp that once shone for miles unseen, is a plague of lighthouse keepers. With that he walked down the stairs and caught the first bus back to the city. ●

*El Capitan, east side. 1 The Nose (5.11 A2) 2 New Dawn (5.9 A4) 3 Mescalito (5.8 A4) 4 Wall of the Early Morning Light (A4) 5 South Pacific (5.11 A5) 6 Pacific Ocean Wall (5.9 A5) 7 Sea of Dreams (5.8 A5) 8 North America Wall (5.9 A4) 9 New Jersey Turnpike (5.10 A4) 10 Iron Hawk (5.10 A4) 11 Aurora (5.8 A5) 12 Tangerine Trip (5.9 A4) 13 Zenyatta Min-datta (A5) 14 Zodiac (5.9 A3) 15 Born Under a Bad Sign (5.11 A5) 16 Eagles Way (5.9 A4) 17 Waterfall Route (5.10 A4) 18 (Unknown) (A4?) 19 East Buttress (5.10). Not included; Hockey Night in Canada (A4), Tribal Rites (A4), Child*

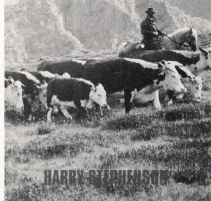




	Fuel	Dry weight	Full weight	Packed dimensions LxWxH mm	Boil times (minutes)	Fuel efficiency Gm/lit boiled	Features & accessories	Stability	Safety	Heat control	Quietness	Snow use	RR Price
<b>Brynac</b>													
Changi	Methylated spirits	750 g	1,000 g	110x200x200	Cold 10.5 — 9.5	47.5	2B,C,Fp,G,W	•••••	•••••	••	•••••	•••••	\$19
<b>Climax</b>													
Solid fuel stove	Solid fuel	50	130	100x75x20	12.6 — 12	42	C	•••••	•••••	••	•••••	•••••	\$350
<b>Coleman</b>													
Peak 1	Shellite	850	1,150	155x135x130	5.5 10.5 4	25	Pp	•••••	•••••	•••••	•••••	•••••	\$65
<b>Daerim</b>													
105	Kerosene	1,430	1,950	190x170x140	5.5 — 4.5	21.5	C,M,Pp	•••••	•••••	•••••	•••••	•••••	\$54
<b>Esbitt</b>													
Pocket Cooker	Solid fuel	50	130	100x75x20	12.6 — 12	42	C	•••••	•••••	••	•••••	•••••	\$4
<b>Gaz</b>													
S200S	Butane	290	580	110x110x190	10.5 — 10.5	21.4		••	••	•••••	•••••	•	\$15
Globetrotter	Butane	330	480	115x115x140	13.5 — 13.5	34	2P	•	••	•••••	•••••	•••••	\$30
<b>Hank Roberts</b>													
Mini Mk III	Butane	210	475	115x120x115	9.5 — 9	15.6	C,1 canister, W	•••••	••	•••••	•••••	•	\$40
<b>Mountain Safety Research</b>													
XGK	Shellite	625	1,220	270x135x105	4.8 4.8 3.5	6.6	F,(M),Pp,S,W	•••••	•••••	••	••	•••••	\$85
	Kerosene	625	1,220	270x135x105	5.3 5.3 3.5	13	F,(M),Pp,S,W	•••••	•••••	••	•	•••••	\$85
<b>Optimus</b>													
Hunter 8R	Shellite	675	750	130x130x80	10.5 11.5 9.5	13.1	C,(Pp),W	•••••	•••••	•••••	••	•••••	\$50
Ranger 99	Shellite	675	750	130x130x80	10.5 11 9.5	13.1	C,G,P,(Pp),W	•••••	•••••	•••••	••	•••••	\$55
Climber 123R (Svea)	Shellite	500	575	130x100x100	7.6 — 6.8	26	C,P,(Pp)	••	••	••	••	•••••	\$47
88N	Shellite	675	750	110x155x155	9.8 13.5 8.8	19.1	2B,C,Fp,G,(Pp),W	•••••	•••••	•••••	••	•••••	\$57
Rider 323	Shellite	775	850	155x120x110	7 11.5 5.5	13.6	Pp	•••••	•••••	•••••	••	•••••	\$56
96L	Kerosene	825	1,050	175x145x105	11.5 16 8.5	9.6	C,Pp,W	•••••	•••••	•••••	••	•••••	\$39
Hiker 111	Shellite	1,625	2,125	180x180x110	6 6.5 5.5	20.5	C,Pp,W	•••••	•••••	•••••	••	•••••	\$83
	Kerosene	1,625	2,125	180x180x110	6 7.5 4.16	13.2	C,Pp,W	•••••	•••••	•••••	••	•••••	\$83
Trapper 81	Methylated spirits	950	1,100	125x205x205	10.6 14 10	37.5	2B,C,Fp,G,W	•••••	•••••	•••••	•••••	•••••	\$40
<b>Primus</b>													
Grasshopper	Butane	280	630	330x90x110	12 — 12	22		•••	•••	•••••	•••••	•••••	\$15
<b>Sigg</b>													
Tourist	Shellite	950	1,025	210x200x130	9.8 13.3 8	19.1	2B,C,Fp,G,W	•••••	•••	•••	••	•••••	\$60
<b>Trangia</b>													
25	Methylated spirits	1,150	1,250	110x220x220	12 13.5 11	43.8	2B,C,Fp,G,(K),W	•••••	•••••	••	•••••	•••••	\$38
27	Methylated spirits	850	1,050	105x180x180	13 14.5 12	43.8	2B,C,Fp,G,(K),W	•••••	•••••	••	•••••	•••••	\$34



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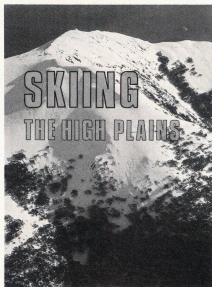
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# Reviews

**Bushwalking and Mountaineering Leadership** Manual of the Victorian Bushwalking and Mountaineering Training and Advisory Board (Victorian Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation, second edition 1981, RRP \$3.00).

This book is concise, perceptive and authoritative. For Victorian readers it cannot be recommended too highly, and bushwalkers from other States will also find it worth having.

Victoria has a certificate course in Bushwalking and Mountaineering Leadership. The staff who run the course are mostly volunteers from member clubs of the Federation of Victorian Walking Clubs. A manual was produced for use in the course and this book, now in its second edition, is on sale commercially.

Focussing mainly on Victorian conditions, *Bushwalking and Mountaineering Leadership* imparts a great deal of practical knowledge and experience. After more than a decade of serious walking, I found the book full of useful tips and well-considered advice.

Topics covered are numerous: trip planning, navigation, attitude, bushwalking ethics, food (including a section on food from the bush), equipment, the elements, emergencies and many more. At such a modest cover price you can't go wrong.

Brian Walters

**The Tasmanian Tramp**, 1982-1983 (Hobart Walking Club, 1982, RRP \$4.95).

There's plenty of good reading in the latest *Tasmanian Tramp*.

The Hobart Walking Club produces the *Tramp* every two years, and the small club publication of old has now grown to a substantial paperback.

The moral strength of the latest issue is its historical perspective. There are tales of pioneer walks and the early explorers, with familiar names like Jack Thwaites and John Bechervaise making contributions.

For some reason there is little or no mention of the controversy surrounding the Franklin and the destruction of wilderness in Tasmania. Nevertheless, the *Tramp* is full of appreciation for wild places and is well worth the cover price.

BW

**50 Day Walks Near Melbourne** by Sandra Bardwell (Anne O'Donovan, second edition 1982, RRP \$6.95).

When you need a whiff of the bush but haven't time for an extended trip, or perhaps need somewhere to start, a book like this is just the thing.

This is the second edition of Sandra

Bardwell's handy book for Melbourne walkers. Each walk is clearly described and supported by a sketch map.

As well as giving all details needed for the walks, Bardwell's book has a wealth of new ideas not to be found elsewhere. It is well worth having.

BW

**Khancoban** (1981, 1:50,000), **Mount Kosciuszko** (1982, 1:50,000), **Thredbo** (1981, 1:50,000) (Central Mapping Authority of New South Wales, RRP \$3.20 each).

Publication of these maps has filled a major gap in the coverage of the Snowy Mountains. Previously, walkers and skiers had to be content with a scale of 1:100,000 if they wanted full colour topographic maps. This often meant insufficient detail; 1:50,000 is a far more convenient scale.

Together, these Central Mapping Authority maps cover the area from Happy Jack's Pondage in the north to Little Pilot in the south, and from the Victorian side of the Murray in the west to Island Bend Pondage in the east. In full colour, the maps have contours and clearly mark huts and tracks.

They are useful for any planned Snowy Mountains trip.

BW

**Kangaroos and Other Macropods of New South Wales** edited by Christine Haigh (New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service, 1982, RRP \$6.00, including postage).

The kangaroo is Australia's best-known symbol. At some time or another most bushwalkers have encountered 'roos or wallabies — perhaps thumping past the tent on a still night, or seen feeding at dawn or dusk.

The macropod ('big foot') family includes potoroos, pademelons and bet-tongs as well as kangaroos and wallabies. Many species are endangered, and often authorities have succumbed to pressure to reduce levels of protection. At least five species have become extinct in New South Wales alone.

This book is packed with information about kangaroos and their kin. It is made up of several authoritative, well-documented papers supported by photographs, diagrams and maps. There are details of distribution, protection levels and scientific data, and also a section providing an historical perspective on Australian attitudes to the kangaroo — ranging from curiosities to food, sport, pests and even commercial stock.

*Kangaroos* is a large format paperback and is very reasonably priced. Its striking cover photograph is also available as a poster for \$2.50.

The New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service has contributed to our appreciation of Australian wildlife by producing this book.

BW

**Dangerous Snakes of Australia** An Illustrated Guide to Australia's Most Venomous Snakes by Peter Mirtschin and Richard Davis (Rigby, 1981, RRP \$11.00).

Australia has the most venomous snakes in the world and this book is a guide to the 28 most dangerous. It gives details as to identification and relative danger of the snakes, as well as a comprehensive study of treatment of snakebite.

Snakes, like the rest of our ecological system, need to be conserved, and there is a detailed study of the distribution of the species and the factors making an impact on their environment.

The book is well illustrated with colour plates of each species, as well as diagrams of identifying features and distribution. At \$11 it is an expensive, though substantial, paperback.

Australia's most dangerous snake? It's the Taipan, followed by the Mulga, or King Brown Snake, and then the Death Adder. Watch your step!

BW

**Subtropical Rainforest** poster by Margaret Senior (New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service, 1982, RRP \$3.00 plus \$0.50 for postage in Australia).

This poster is the latest in a series produced by the NSW NPWS. The flora and fauna of the lush subtropical rainforest are its theme.

On the reverse side of the poster are notes describing the relationship between the plants and animals in such an environment.

Chris Baxter

**Wild Food in Australia** by AB and JW Cribb (Collins, 1981, RRP \$15.95).

Remember when you were a kid and you used to read stories about people (usually other kids) getting lost in the forest? And even though it was dark and scary, and they had no food with them, they always managed to survive by picking nuts and berries or by finding some delicious fruit growing on a tree? And did you laugh smugly at the whole idea of being able to pick wild food in the

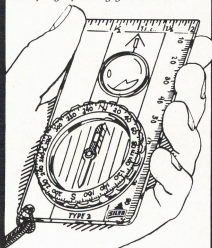


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bush — 'cause you knew darn well that in Australia it just wasn't true? I certainly did — but apparently I was wrong!

This fascinating new book purports to be an authoritative volume on Australia's edible plants — and apparently there are hundreds of them! The Cribbs claim to have gleaned information from tribal aborigines across Australia, and to have tested (and tasted) some 200 of the species discussed. The book attempts to familiarize and instruct the average ignoramus in ways to eat many of Australia's plants — even some of the more forbidding varieties, such as the stinging nettle (*Urtica*).

## **Wild Food IN AUSTRALIA**

A. B. & J. W. Cribb



While stinging nettles may not be your idea of good food, you will no doubt find yourself fascinated by the range and variety of plants which indeed are edible.

The book is divided into chapters describing the various parts of a plant which can be eaten; fruit, seeds, leaves and shoots, roots, flowers and so on. Within each chapter is a list of foods, a description of the plant, methods of cooking and an assessment of the flavour.

Foods are honestly assessed (it would seem) and by no means all are given the 'wrap up' as being 'good tucker'.

Plants from all over Australia are covered, and for each plant a distribution of States is given. While all States seem to have their share of root and leaf foods, it seems that the northern States fare rather better as far as quantity of wild fruit is concerned. Obviously the tropical conditions are more conducive to growing tasty fruit. Queensland, Northern Territory, and some parts of northern New South Wales are privileged to grow such delicious fruit as cluster fig, macadamia nut, Davidson's plum, coconut, bush lemon, emuberreries,

mango, paw-paw, native banana, native mulberry and cocky apple, as well as many varieties of passionfruit. For the southern States the choice is much more limited but includes sweet apple berry, native grape, the inevitable blackberry and a tasty morsel entitled Devil's Guts.

Not content to stick entirely to flora the Cribbs also present some interesting chapters on algae, fungi and edible fauna. The guide to fungi is useful, but desperately in need of illustration. The list of fungi to avoid is probably almost meaningless without more diagrams and photographs — particularly of the really nasty ones.

The chapter devoted to edible fauna is not at all what I expected. Techniques on spearing fish, hunting kangaroo or alligators are definitely not given. Rather, a list of catchable food of a different nature is described. The list includes Bogong moths, freshwater crayfish, ants, marine molluscs, wasps (the white larvae can be eaten raw), wild bees (taking their honey), shrimps, tortoises and approved methods for locating and eating witchetty grubs. All very fascinating really, but unless you carry butterfly nets (for the Bogong moths) or tortoise traps, it may be of little practical help to the average bushwalker.

The algae section includes both fresh water algae and varieties of seaweeds. Sea lettuce is a fairly common seaweed found growing in rock pools throughout Australia. In Europe, Japan and Hawaii, this algae has been used mostly as a raw salad vegetable or in soups. The Cribbs say that it is surprisingly tough, even after cooking, with a strong marine flavour. Though they liked it, apparently others were not terribly impressed. A Frenchman who prepared a sea lettuce salad wrote that it was 'leathery and waxy in taste, and in spite of a good digestion, I thought I would be ill'.

As a guide to identifying plants, both botanical and common names are given.

As you may have gathered, I found *Wild Food in Australia* very entertaining as well as enlightening reading. However, for the book to be of some practical use, particularly for bushwalking, people must be able to correctly and unambiguously identify the particular plant in question. While there are some colour plates and sketches, there need to be many more. I would not feel confident attempting to eat the plants I know quite well by common name without having an illustration to check that it was indeed the plant I thought it was.

Even so, the book is still an exciting piece of literature because of the way it increases our appreciation of the Australian bush and opens up possibilities of exploring it in a new way.

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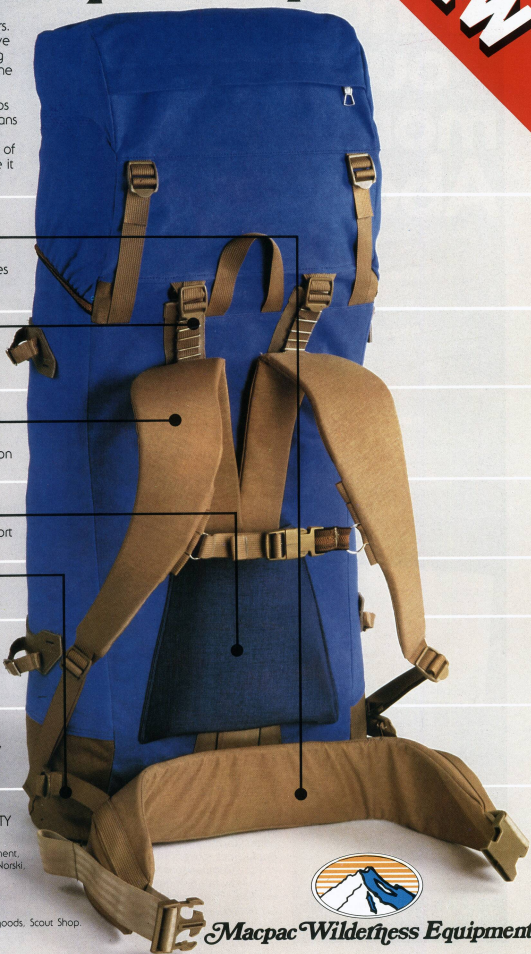
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the aborigines knew about finding food in such seemingly hostile terrain. At school I can remember wanting a real aborigine to come into my class (or take me out of the class) and show me some of the lore his people had known for centuries. Here, at last, is a book which at least gives me a start.

Elaine Downie

**Basic Rock, Snow and Ice Climbing**  
by Jeff Boyton (Reed, 1982, RRP \$7.95).

Probably Australia's first commercially published climbing manual, *Basic Rock* sets out on the ambitious course of trying to cover the sport from hill walking rudiments through rockclimbing to alpine mountaineering.

Quickly you are struck by the author's dogmatic approach. Items of gear are unconditionally recommended or rejected, often without comment. The result is a dull, superficial treatment of advice that is not always uniformly applicable: 'When hiking or climbing in the mountains, climbers should rise with the sun and be cooking dinner by the last hour of daylight'. The brief section on crossing creeks is dangerously incomplete.

It is this incompleteness of information that makes much of the book unreliable. Many common and virtually essential techniques and equipment, such as double ropes and (fixed) bolts are not mentioned. Friends certainly warrant more than their brief mention. Incredibly, snow stakes are hardly mentioned, whereas the tedious-to-place Deadmen anchors are discussed in some detail.

The section on abseiling is particularly incomplete. The dangers of all aspects of this activity, not merely of anchor selection, need more emphasis, knowledge of the classic abseil is a 'must' as a back-up to more comfortable systems relying on karabiners and other gadgets which may not always be available, and the description of the 'crossed crab descender' is not adequate, particularly regarding the 'brake bar carabiner(s)'.

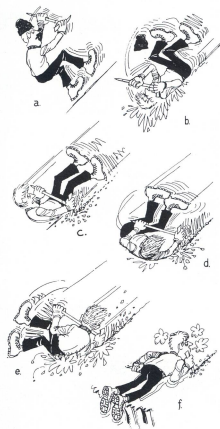
*Basic Rock* allows 74 pages to give basic instruction in a broad and potentially dangerous activity; they clearly are not enough.

CB

**Mountaineering** The Freedom of the Hills edited by Ed Peters (Reed, fourth edition 1982, RRP \$24.29).

This classic and proven American instruction tome devotes well over 500 pages to much the same subject that *Basic Rock* covers in a fraction of the space. Comparisons between the two are hardly fair but, despite the price difference, are embarrassing. *Mountaineering* is something of a classic in the field, and rightly so.

Whilst very American in its ter-



minology, examples and approach, *Mountaineering* is generally applicable to Australia and New Zealand. The diagrams and other illustrations are profuse and usually excellent.

CB

**A Climber's Guide to Mt Piddington**  
by Andrew Penney and Mike Law  
(Published by the authors, 1982, RRP \$6.80).

This guide to New South Wales' most popular rockclimbing area, like so many NSW guides before it, has been 'in the pipeline' almost since the days of hemp ropes. At one stage or other the manuscript seems to have been lost in the bottom of every locker at Sydney University.

But local climbing entrepreneur and cliff developer, Penney, and the perennial *enfant terrible* of Oz Rock, Law, have finally pulled it off.

The result is an inspiring, generally up-to-date and detailed little gem. And they haven't down-graded too many of your reviewer's old favourites! The photos are very good and the information interestingly and clearly presented. The diagrams are probably helpful but don't look it.

As is traditional in such publications, 'they' (in this case Victorian climbers and Kim Carrigan, among others) get plenty of stick and 'us' (the authors and their fellow mad-bolters) receive plenty of subtle (?) ego boosts. But it's all 'good clean fun'!

CB

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# TrackNotes

## The Budawangs and the Reedy Creek Gorge

New South Wales' Budawangs, by David Yeoman, and how to find Victoria's wild Reedy Creek Gorge, with Brian Walters.



### The Budawangs

●WHILST SAILING NORTH ALONG AUSTRALIA'S east coast, Captain Cook sighted a distinctively shaped mountain that rose in a sharp triangle and was topped by huge slabs of rock. He named it Pigeon House.

This impressive looking peak is one of a number of magnificent mountains that form part of the Budawang National Park. Situated between Braidwood and Nowra, near the south coast of New South Wales, this Park offers bushwalkers rugged, sandstone cliffs and densely timbered, steep-sided gorges; walks along open, windswept heathland or descents into dark recesses of rainforest.

To discover this bushland yourself you could try some of the walks described below.

**Safety.** The walks described are all week-end walks that can be extended for as long as is convenient. Some hints: there are no facilities of any kind;

water is usually available in creeks and in rock pools but apart from the main rivers there is no reliable source in a hot summer; shelter can be found in the many sandstone caves, especially in wet weather, but tents are also advisable; in winter, nights are cold, down to 0°; take long pants for getting through areas of sword grass and sharp heath shrubs; map and compass are always essential.

**Maps.** The best map for detail and references mentioned above is *The Northern Budawang Range and the Upper Clyde Valley*, 1:42,240 by Coast and Mountain Walkers. Good for general use and showing main access roads is *Ulladulla* 1:100,000.

**Access.** Entry can be made from several points.  
a) The northern area of the Budawangs is best approached on the Braidwood to Nowra Road, passing through Nerriga to the few derelict buildings that make up Sassafras. From Sassafras head south along a four-wheel-drive track through several gates until coming to the open heathland and rock slabs of Newhaven Gap.

*A perfect autumn day in the northern Budawangs, and above, looking east from The Castle past Byangee Walls, to Pigeon House and the south coast. Photos Charles Leedman, and Ian Watson*

b) The western side and central area can be entered by taking the Mongarlowe Road north of Braidwood. About 20 kilometres north of Mongarlowe take the right-hand track to Wog Wog Station, near Wog Wog Creek. Some landowners are now disputing the rights-of-way here and it would be worth checking with a local bushwalking club or the Canberra National Parks Association for updated information.

c) Both the eastern side and central area can be reached from the coast by heading west on the Pigeon House Road which turns off the Princes Highway between Batemans Bay and Milton. Signs lead to Pigeon House itself but to get further in, head west along the road to Castle Creek.

**The Hidden Valley.** This is a good introductory walk into the area. It begins at Newhaven Gap in the



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northern part of the Park. Vehicles can be left atop the large rock slabs either side of a four-wheel-drive track. The track followed along the top of the Galbraith Plateau. About one kilometre from the beginning of the track a diversion can be made to the east, from where some indication can be obtained of the depth of the Clyde Gorge.

The main track then gradually descends into heavily timbered country. Red wattle birds abound, greeting you with their raucous cries. The track divides at Quilts Mountain. Take the left-hand fork which rapidly descends into a small section of rain forest where dark green lichen contrasts with brightly coloured fungi. Listen for the lyrebirds.

After crossing a creek the track climbs into dry forest and when level ground is reached, keep an eye out for a row of stones along a felled log at the left of the track. This marks the turn off into Hidden Valley. The route now leads east for about a kilometre. Some trees have been blazed but not with any regularity, so ignore them and try to keep to the slightly worn track. You should slowly begin to climb until a gap in the cliffs is reached. Once there the gap here is the place where the cliffs find good camping spots by a creek.

Exploratory walks can be made from the valley around the surrounding cliffs. There are plenty of honeycomb formations in the sandstone caves. A climb up Sturgiss Mountain by rockhopping south of Dark Brothers Cave, culminating in a narrow chimney, gives the walker a chance to search for aboriginal signs, admire the extensive views and enjoy the bright orange banksia flowers.

**Bibbenluke Mountain.** This walk, from the western edge of the Park, takes the walker to the fringes of the more difficult, but more spectacular, central area.

Access is via the Mongarlowe Road, past Wog Wog Station, leaving vehicles near a green shed known as Iron Hut. A track can be followed in an easterly direction until coming to the hump of Korra Hill. Diversions can be made here. By heading south on to the jutting plateau of Admiration Point, excellent views can be obtained of the adjacent mountains — Mt Owen, The Castle and Byangene Mountain — as well as of the seemingly endless gorges and ridges to the south. North of Korra Hill another diversion can be made, to look for deeply worn axe-sharpening grooves amongst the numerous rock slabs.

Head north-east from Korra Hill toward the unmistakable Corang Peak, a smaller version of Pigeon House. A direct ascent takes little time and gives good all-round views. The track then continues across painful conglomerate rock formations and drops from this moon-like landscape into lush eucalypt forest and swamp country. A crossing of Burramoot Brook is made into Burramoot Valley, where huge sandstone cliffs surround you. Bibbenluke, a wide, flat-topped mountain, can be seen clearly once out of the valley. The route continues round the western and northern edges of Bibbenluke. Camping spots are varied. The flats offer comfortable camping on the springy ground, but are often fog-bound. For closer contact with the mountain head up to the sides of the sandstone visible from the flats. Here you should find numerous caves.

**Monolith alley.** To enter the very centre of the Budawangs, the Bibbenluke walk can be extended to include a visit to Monolith Valley — appropriately named due to the towering cliffs that surround it.

A track on the swampy flats at the base of Bibbenluke can be followed in a southerly and then easterly direction toward Mt Cole. If you have camped in the Bibbenluke caves it is best to head straight down to the flats, rather than find a route along the cliff base which would take you through numerous gullies dense with li-tree and sword grass.

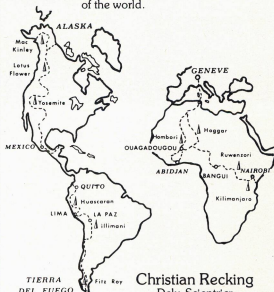
After leaving the Bibbenluke area, head east along an open saddle which leads to a divided track round Mt Cole. The left-hand fork climbs steadily, skirting the cliffs before reaching rock slabs. These are negotiated fairly easily, keeping to the right of Donjon Mountain. Some scrambling is necessary as you begin to descend into the valley and reach the Seven Gongs Pinnacles — formations of resistant sandstone.

To return to the saddle at the base of Mt Cole keep heading south through a small natural arch and into a section of rainforest. Care must be taken to find the correct route up Mt Owen. Try to keep to

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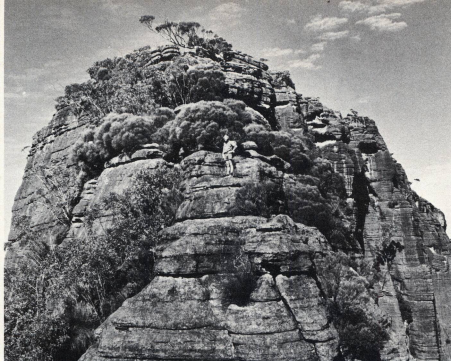
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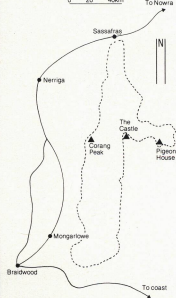




*The ravages of time and the elements have left their mark on Monolith Valley, and top. The Castle's craggy summit. Watson*

#### Budawangs National Park

0 20 40km



the southern edge of Mt Cole until a feasible route up a narrow cleft can be found. Once on the open, rocky slopes of Mt Owen keep to the lip of the deep gorge on your right. Numerous descents are available. This route out would be very difficult after heavy rain.

**The Castle.** This central area can also be approached from the coast by taking the Pigeon House Road, between Batemans Bay and Nowra, to the Yabboro Road and driving to Castle Creek. The walking route to the Castle begins by following an old four-wheel-drive track to the west of Castle Creek and then along Kallanna Ridge. The track travels through steep, forested country at the base of the ridge, becomes open as the ridge rises, and finally changes to a short but steep section of conglomerate sandstone.

As the track approaches The Castle it slides along the western cliffline. The cliffline peters out and there is a steep climb up between boulder outcrops. A large fissure in the top terrace leads to a tunnel that crosses to the eastern side. Good camping caves are found on this side. The final ascent is made up an easily found gully.

From the top, spectacular views of the surrounding area and eastward to the coastline, with the Pigeon House in view, are worth the climb. Even the log is worth reading: 'Now I'm going home to my wheelchair and slippers and will henceforth act my age', will probably strike a chord in the pounding hearts of many walkers. ●

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## Reedy Creek Gorge

• THE SNOWY MOUNTAINS REACH THEIR ZENITH AT Kosciuszko, but they tumble southwards into Victoria to form the Cobberas Range and reach their final southern outpost with the Nunniong Plateau. Reedy Creek Gorge is a spectacular and remote chasm near Mt Nunniong.

It is possible to visit the gorge in a week-end, but ideally a day should be set aside for exploring, so three days are recommended. Reedy Creek Gorge could be incorporated as part of an extended trip in the area.

Only small parties should venture into this gorge, as there are no reliable campsites and even a party of four may be hard put to find sufficient level ground for a good night's sleep. In times of heavy rainfall there may be no space in the valley at all.

The simplest route is that from the south, which is described in these notes.

Grid references are derived from the National Mapping, 1:100,000 map, *Murrindal*.

It is not easy to reach the start of the walk. Cars must be driven through areas where logging roads have been recently constructed, and many of the new roads are not marked on any available map. Follow these directions carefully.

Turn east from the Omeo Highway eight kilometres north of Swift's Creek at Tongio (the road is labelled 'Tambo Valley Golf Course'). When the road forks, take the right fork and after passing the golf course (on your left) commence winding steeply up to the Nunniong Plateau. Stay on the major road (Nunniong Road) ignoring smaller tracks on each side.

Eventually the road passes beside Nunniong Plain (on your left) and shortly afterwards Nunniong Road turns to the right and Nunniong Road continues as a smaller and rougher track. Keep to Nunniong Road.

At the next fork, follow the right road, labelled 'Wheatfields Track'.

Some kilometres farther on there is another fork, and again the right fork is labelled 'Wheatfields Track'. Turn up the road to the left, which passes up the western side of the Timbarra Valley before climbing spectacularly over the western shoulder of Mt Nunniong.

Not far on there is a four-wheel-drive track on the left labelled 'Brumby Point Track'. Leave transport here (grid reference 923947).

The walk commences by following Brumby Point Track to its end. The track follows a ridge which descends eastwards, and lyrebirds and other wildlife abound.

At the end of Brumby Point Track (958947) the valley of Reedy Creek may be seen gaping to the north. The gorge is hidden in the folds of the valley and is north-east from here. At 60° (true) there is a rocky knoll (964987) which may be reached by descending the scrubby and wooded ridge eastwards. Keep the valley of Reedy Creek visible to the left and you will be on the correct ridge.

From the knoll descend very steeply over rocky and unstable ground down the spur which falls away to the north.

From time to time a small hill will be visible below and ahead (964997). On reaching the saddle at the foot of the hill, turn east and follow the gully down to the creek bed which flows generally north. Follow this to Reedy Creek, being careful of the steep drops in places.

It is a tremendous experience to reach the wild peacefulness of Reedy Creek, with the gorge now about a kilometre away downstream.

In times of heavy rainfall it would be hazardous to go into the gorge, but generally there should be no problem. There is an exhilarating sense of isolation about this rugged area, with its towering 200 metre walls, the delight of any rockclimber, and the haunting beauty of its pool and ferns. Reedy Creek Gorge is an unspoilt wilderness. •

Deep in Gippsland's Reedy Creek Gorge. Walters

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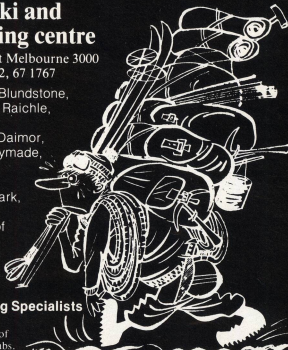
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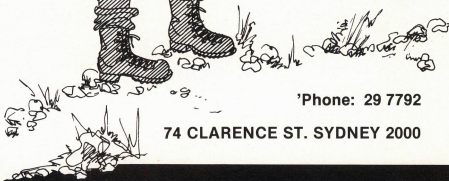
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## Equipment

● **Chooft, Chooft.** Optimus have released a revised model 111. The new stove is designed to burn either kerosene or Shellite. The ported burner gives excellent heat control and keeps noise to a quiet roar. At a weight of over 1,600 grams empty, it is really aimed at the mountaineering expedition market. Around \$85.

The Hank Roberts Mini Mk III stove is the first liquid feed butane stove on sale in Australia since the ALP 8100. Once burning, liquid feed stoves are less prone to flare-ups and cold weather problems. Hank Roberts cannisters are unique; they simply slide on to a needle without any rigid attachment. Distributed by Outdoor Survival, Victoria, it comes with one fuel cartridge for around \$30.

Two new kerosene stoves on the market are the Daerim L747 and 105 from Korea. The 105 is similar to the L747, but has a smaller fuel tank. The most interesting feature is the pre-heating device. It is like a small blowtorch, aimed at the burner to vaporize the kerosene. It is quite effective and removes the need to carry a separate priming fuel. The stoves use a burner very similar to the new Optimus 111. They will burn Shellite, but are much more effective with kerosene.

The stoves come with a carrying case, maintenance kit and fuel gauge. Without the carry case, the weight is quite reasonable. Distributed by Richards McCallum, Victoria. Around \$59 and \$54.

Dave Jones

● **Tubular Cells.** The nine individual chambers of the feather weight Air Lift Blue Wing 42 (500x1,050x50 millimetres, 350 grams, \$60) modular mattress each inflate with a single breath and seal with ingenious push-pull valves. Arranged between ripstop nylon taffeta, the tubes give soft and stable support that isn't vulnerable to a single puncture. Heavier and longer models cost \$45-\$75. Deflated Air Lift mattresses are astonishingly compact, literally pocket size.

● **Boots.** A new style walking boot, the Scarpa Trekker has just been introduced to Australia by Mountain Equipment of Sydney. Complete with an injection moulded Skywalk sole and a mixture of suede leather and Cordura uppers, they weigh in at only 1.2 kilograms — far lighter than other styles of boots recommended for similar use.

An attractive two tone green colour scheme and very comfortable padded lining backed by Scarpa's reputation for quality workmanship, make this a welcome addition to outdoor footwear range.

A two month trek in Nepal proved an ideal testing ground. There was little opportunity to 'break the boots in', but this didn't cause any problems as they were extremely comfortable from the beginning.

Unlike traditional leather boots, there is little give or stretching with this model, the uppers being predominantly Cordura. This necessitates careful selection of the correct size at the time



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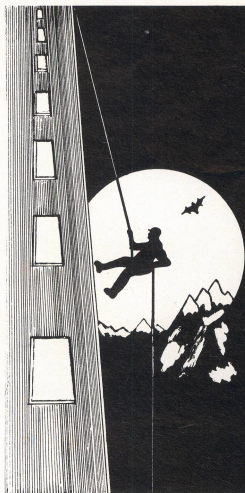


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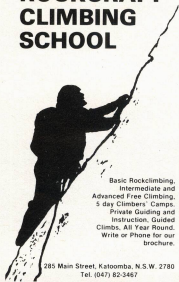
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The Cordura proved shower-proof, but there was little opportunity to test more than this, apart from occasionally stepping into a puddle. The non-breathable nature of the synthetic uppers did contribute to a slightly damper foot than may have been encountered with leather boots.

The Scarpa Trekker costs \$69.50 and is an excellent lightweight boot for general bushwalking in Australia or trekking in the Himalayas.

Jon Chester

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For those who want a medium weight boot for rugged terrain and heavy loads there is the **Backpacker**. The fully leather lined upper is crafted from quality vegetable tanned top grain leather. Features include a padded gusseted tongue, scree collar, leather insole, double stitched Littleway construction with a Skywalk Fitzroy sole. Sizes 36-47. Weight 1.9 kilograms a pair. \$108.

The top grain leather, double tongue **Nordic** model ski touring boot has a fleecy lining, a hook and D-ring lacing system and a 75 millimetre Nordic Norm rubber sole. Sizes 38-47. Weight 1.3 kilograms a pair. \$72.

The Scarpa **Telemark** is among the new generation of telemark boots that

are suitable for heavy overnight touring and cross country downhill. Made from top quality waxed full grain leather, it has a double tongue and unique quick release instep support strap and clip reminiscent of downhill ski boots. Sizes 40-47. Weight 2 kilograms a pair. \$99.

• **Dry Japara Reproofing.** Since the introduction of dry japara in 1979, no satisfactory method of reproofing it has been found. Wettex, recommended by manufacturers, offers only temporary relief.

A more effective proofing agent is Dry Seal. The method of application is as follows. Wash the japara, using the heavy duty cycle of your washing machine. This removes old proofing and dirt trapped in the fabric. Dilute the Dry Seal with mineral turpentine four parts to one. Rub the mixture into the japara with a towelling cloth. Two thin coats are better than one. This operation is best carried out at room temperature.

John Green

• **Flashing.** The new Tough Light torch from Eveready has a black, specially developed thermo plastic covered body to withstand rugged, outdoor use.

The weatherproof, drop and shock resistant qualities of Eveready Tough Light are complemented with strong, light output and a push-button switch. It uses two D size batteries. \$5.78.

• **Mont Bheesty.** An easily refilled aluminiumized wine cask bladder sewn into a handy Cordura carry bag, the Bheesty conforms to available pack space and occupies only the volume of water contained. About \$6.50.

• **It Works!** Doan's magnesium fire starting tool will appeal to anyone who has been frustrated by damp 'waterproof' matches. Shavings scraped from the magnesium block with even a bread knife ignite with a single blow to the sparkling insert. Infallible and startling; about \$7. Distributed by Outdoor Survival.





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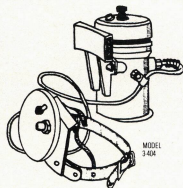


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• **Super Cup.** The Kasa wonder cup from Sweden resembles traditional Lapp hand carved wooden cups, and fits comfortably in a relaxed, cupped hand. This unbreakable polypropylene utensil is calibrated in 50 millimetre gradations and is distributed by Outdoor Agencies.

• **Dr Avalanche.** From Geoff Wayatt of Mountain Recreation in New Zealand come four alpine safety aids. As well as the familiar emergency accident procedure leaflet, there is a waterproof field book, grid plate and hand lens for identifying snow crystals and assessing avalanche hazard.

• **Into Harness.** The Rockjoc by Outdoor Life is a simple, comfortable, continuous loop harness 'suitable for abseiling, canyoning, hanging belays, falling, cheating, aid work and even climbing!' A combination of a harness and a belay seat, and originally designed for supervised, inexperienced adventurers, it may find acceptance with serious climbers.

Another new Australian climbing harness is made by Bushgear. Something of a cross between New Zealand's Aspiring harness and the fabled Whillans harness from England, it is well made, offers good support and seems safe. It does not require a karabiner which, of course, is an advantage, but it is relatively heavy and would be easier to do up if a less slippery tape was used. \$33.50.

• **Dome Home.** Despite a gentle profile and sloping walls, the Ultimate Phazor is one of the more spacious dome tents available and is now on sale in Australia.

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Phazor F three person 3.5 kilograms.

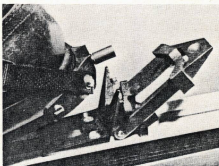
• **Super Fox.** The Blue Ridge three/four season Super Fox sleeping bag is designed for moderate winter nights and those likely to encounter wet conditions.

Three layers of polyester Polarguard above and two below insulate the occupant. Weight 2.2 kilograms. \$126.

• **Touring Aids.** Nordic Way (ACT) offer several intriguing cross country skiing aids as well as regular lines.

The **Voile flexible heel binding** plate mounts under conventional three pin toe bindings. While in the binding the heel is free to lift during striding, turning (telemark) or in the event of a fall. Torsional and lateral rigidity are improved without hindering the boot's natural flex. The Voile binding plate reinforces sloppy boots and toe bindings and reduces boot wear. \$53.

The **Norpine heel binding** mounts directly to the ski like a downhill ski binding. The boot heel can be locked down for downhill control with safety release.



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The **Hillclimber** may take some of the anxiety out of climbing steep or icy slopes. Two independent fins, one each side of the ski, give positive traction. These spring loaded paddles have plastic coated steel spikes which give a crampon grip on ice, tilt back while gliding and can be locked in a non-operating position. \$19.

• **Wildcraft.** Appealing in its simplicity, lightness and compact proportions, the Wildcraft internal frame **Kapana** pack is a welcome addition to the local scene. Back padding channelled for ventilation is an obvious concession to Australian conditions. The Kapana is solidly sewn and features a fully adjustable harness.

Wildcraft, of Werribee, Victoria, also announce a much refined and lighter **Packbed**.







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## Wildfire

### Snow Business

I'm writing about the cross country ski survey published in the winter 1982 edition of *Wild...*

**Durability and Quality:** Most skis available in Australia are adequately durable for their intended use. Few are prone to breakage. The Asnes T54, Epoke and Bonna 2000PC are tough durable skis which are used widely in hire pools, and which should be rated at least as highly as Rossignol. Rossignol on the other hand has a substantial recent history of breakage.

**Performance:** Performance criteria should have been spelt out and related to skiers' abilities. It is common knowledge that a ski can be excellent for a capable skier, yet difficult for a novice to handle. As a result of this lack of definition the Trak Nordic Tour and the Fischer Expedition are rated with the same performance, even though they are as different as chalk and cheese. Other dramatic examples can also be found.

**Bases:** No distinction has been made between performance of waxed and waxless bases in the same model of ski. There can be substantial variation, such as exists between a mica based ski and the same ski with a waxing base.

The lack of detail makes the performance rating misleading and inaccurate.

**Selection:** While it's not possible to cover all skis in such a survey, the omission of a popular ski such as the Karhu Telemark is a serious oversight. It is more readily available than several models surveyed, and would certainly outsell many of those surveyed. Two models of skis featured, the Epoke Alpine Edge and the Trak Telemark were imported in small numbers and are generally unavailable.

This *Wild* survey leaves a lot to be desired in accuracy and explanation. I look forward to your future surveys which I hope will be as accurate and informative as previous surveys have been.

Philip Coleman  
Director, Bushgear Australia  
Melbourne, Vic

*Durability and quality are not based on breakage alone. Asnes, Epoke and Bonna are all Norwegian skis using similar materials, namely wood and laminated wood cores. The skis are trouble free in cold conditions but absorption of water in wet conditions causes the core to expand and contract. This affects the camber of the skis, which increases and decreases, and in due course breaks down the true performance of the skis. Furthermore, cracking along the top*

*plate from the screw holes of the bindings and heel plates has been a common problem with some of these skis. This again allows more water to penetrate. In addition, the finish on the skis, particularly the Epoke, has in the past left a lot to be desired. Admittedly this does not affect performance, but it is still a consideration in the areas of value and quality.*

*True, some Rossignol skis have broken in two, a rare occurrence in cross country skis today. But the reason is quite simple and is a possible weakness in a fully synthetic ski. During the injection of polyurethane an air bubble can form in the core of the ski. It usually only happens in the very first stage of the production. The number of skis affected in this way, compared to the total production, is minimal and the defect is not common to the total production range. Whenever this has occurred, these skis have been replaced at no charge to the skier.*

**Performance:** My evaluation of performance is based on the ability of a type of ski (touring, light touring etc) to perform well in the area for which it is designed, for the average skier in a variety of conditions. If all levels of the abilities were to be discussed and matched to different skis it would be necessary to serialize the article. Therefore I have given Trak Nordic Tour and Fischer Expedition the same performance rating because I believe the average skier would handle these skis equally well.

**Bases:** Please note my comment in the article. 'The question of whether to wax or not to wax is still a consideration (for some skiers) and most cross country skis are available in the two base types. Should you wax? No, not if the task keeps you from skiing. If you want the best performance, yes.' Also note the article was not meant to be a discussion on waxed versus waxless skis, but a preview of some of the skis available for 1982.

**Selection:** Skis were selected from a range of skis represented in the Ski Trade Show in October, 1981. The Karhu ski range was not present and I received no information regarding these skis or their availability for 1982.

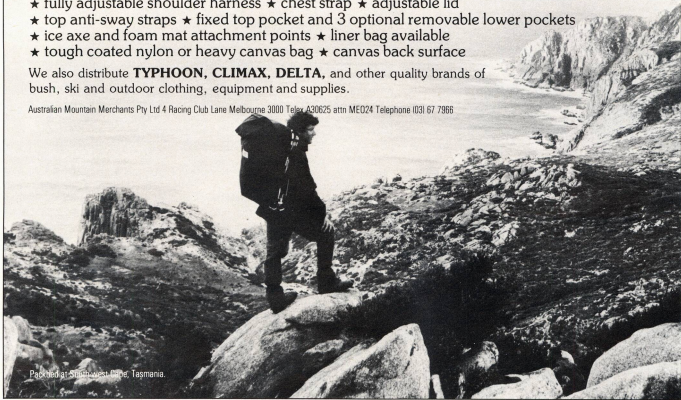
The article was written in February, 1982 and the different suppliers were contacted regarding availability and distribution of the models described. At that time the suppliers assured me that the respective models would be available for the 1982 Australian winter. Short deliveries from overseas in the Epoke, Alpine Edge and the Trak Telemark, as well as Rossignol Random-

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nee AR, only became apparent after the survey had gone to print.

Chris Hellerud  
Director, National Nordic Coaching & Instruction Scheme  
Australian Ski Federation

### ON THE WRONG TRACK

Gordon Bedford's comments (*Wildfire*, winter 1982) on the Federation of Victorian Walking Clubs' work on the Bungalow Spur Track on Mt Feathertop would be funny if they were not apparently meant seriously. As the organizer of that work, I would like to answer his question: 'What for.'

The Feathertop Track has existed since the 1920s. Over the last few years it has become seriously overgrown by acacia and oxylum regrowth, and there were many logs across the track. The effect of the regrowth was to force people to the outside of the bench, causing damage to the edge of the track...

The comments on the Alpine Walking Track are not justified. It is rather lightly marked and, in fact, needs re-marking and general maintenance in many places.

The tracks are just about the only sign of our presence in the mountains. You may have noticed that other people are interested in the mountains and that pretending they do not exist does not work. If we do not maintain the tracks we will lose not only the tracks but the mountains also. It is not a choice between tracks and no tracks, it is between tracks and roads, or worse...

Tom Kneen  
Balwyn, Vic

Gordon Bedford comments in your last issue that he 'is amused to observe the proliferation of wilderness guiding organizations'. I am unable to share this amusement. The proliferation of 'adventure tour' marketers is healthy from the point of view of energy and initiative in a free enterprise market. But I am concerned at the inevitable lowering of standards in leadership and outfitting which, at best, causes the public to become alienated and, at worst, can seriously hurt people...

However, that is our society. We can only hope that the public will learn to scrutinize services carefully before buying and that outfitters will learn to offer high standards or go out of business...

Warwick Deacock  
Managing Director, Ausventure

### UP THE CREEK

... I would like to know who the budding Burt Reynolds was who did the Franklin River solo (*Wild*, autumn 1982). He was either a most talented paddler or just a very stupid novice. I suspect the latter, as he broke just about every canoeing code...

Peter King  
Burwood, Vic

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581 Murray Street  
Perth 6000  
Ph (09) 321 5259

Western Canoe Centre  
261 Queen Street  
North Fremantle 6159  
Ph (09) 335 9173

Wilderness Equipment  
PO Box 83  
Fremantle 6160  
Ph (09) 335 2813

## New Zealand

The Alpine Guides Mountain  
Shop  
Mt Cook National Park  
Ph (Mt Cook) 834

Alp Sports Ltd  
Cnr Madras & Tuam Streets  
Christchurch  
Ph (Christchurch) 67 148

Mountain Equipment (NZ) Ltd  
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Christchurch  
Ph (Christchurch) 793 747

The Wilderness Shop  
101 Lower Stuart Street  
Dunedin  
Ph (Dunedin) 773 679

# Adventure activities

## New South Wales

Adventure Travel Centre  
28 Market Street  
Sydney 2000  
Ph (02) 29 8057

Australian Himalayan  
Expeditions  
159 Cathedral Street  
Woolloomooloo 2011  
Ph (02) 357 3555

Ausventure  
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Mosman 2088  
Ph (02) 960 1677

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Caving School  
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Austimner 2514  
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Otway Street  
Gundagai 2722  
Ph (069) 441 443

Cascade Tours  
c/- Paddy Pallin Jindabyne  
PO Box 72  
Jindabyne 2627  
Ph (0648) 62 458

The Explorers Group Pty Ltd  
363A Pitt Street  
Sydney 2000  
Ph (02) 264 7788

Mt Cook Ski Region  
PO Box 713  
North Sydney 2060  
Ph (02) 922 6188

New Guinea Expeditions  
28 O'Connell Street  
Sydney 2000  
Ph (02) 231 6066

Nymboida Whitewater Rafting  
Expeditions  
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Woolgoolah 2450  
Ph (066) 54 1788

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285 Main Street  
Katoomba 2780  
Ph (047) 82 3467

Skilltrek  
PO Box 35  
Adaminaby 2630  
Ph (0648) 42 360

Wilderness Expeditions  
PO Box 755  
Cooma 2630  
Ph (0648) 21 587

Wildtrek Pty Ltd  
PO Box 1420  
Coffs Harbour 2450  
Ph (066) 53 4469

## Queensland

Climb High  
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Broadway 4006  
Ph (07) 52 8804

interNATIONAL PARKtours  
Bima-Burra Lodge  
Beechmont 4211  
Ph (075) 33 3583

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Ipswich 4305  
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Petrie 4502  
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Wildtrek Pty Ltd  
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Cairns 4870  
Ph (070) 51 4055

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Adelaide 5000  
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Mountain Adventure  
40 Waymouth Street  
Adelaide 5000  
Ph (08) 212 7857

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Hobart 7000  
Ph (002) 31 0777

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Hobart 7000  
Ph (002) 34 2226

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PO Box 516  
Devonport 7310  
Ph (004) 24 3971

Karie Adventures  
33 Quayle Street  
Sandy Bay 7005  
Ph (002) 34 8305

Tasair Pty Ltd  
Cambridge Aerodrome  
Cambridge 7170  
Ph (002) 48 5088

Wilderness Tours  
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Arve Road  
Geeveston 7116  
Ph (002) 97 1384

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Basecamps & Beyond  
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PO Box 37  
Halls Gap 3381  
Ph (053) 56 4300

Bogong Jack Adventures  
PO Box 209  
Wangaratta 3677  
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Concept Tours  
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Mt Waverley 3149  
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The Outdoor People Pty Ltd  
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Croydon 3136  
Ph (03) 725 9419

Outdoor Travel Centre  
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Melbourne 3000  
Ph (03) 67 3354

Peregrine Expeditions  
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Melbourne 3000  
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Selecta Tours Ltd  
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Mt Cook National Park  
Ph (Mt Cook) 834

Alpine and Ski Tours  
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Ph (Christchurch) 796 154

Alpine Recreation Canterbury  
119 Warren Crescent  
Christchurch 2  
Ph (Christchurch) 389 502

Alpine Ski Touring  
Ski Guides NZ Ltd  
PO Box 11  
Wanaka  
Ph (Wanaka) 7930

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Ph (Wanaka) 7930

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Ph (Wanaka) 7330

School of Mountaineering  
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**Canoe Film Festival.** Brighton Town Hall, Carpenter Street, Brighton, Thursday 4 November, 8pm. 1 Bala, Wales. World Championships 1981 (First release). 2 Rafting Franklin. 3 Trekking Nepal. Canoe 87 (official film) — 55 minutes of wild water racing and slalom at Bala, Wales. Including the new Grand Prix event, all medal winners (some in slow motion) and personalities of note, and two different looks at Richard Fox's gold medal winning run in slalom. Plus Rafting the Franklin. The Franklin is soon to be added to the World Heritage List and now the subject of 'international vandalism': our last wild river. And Kingdom of the Gods — the best film ever on life in Nepal. Shown on spectacular giant screen video. For further information contact Canoe Equip, 427 Hampton Street, Hampton, Victoria 3188. Phone (03) 598 8814.

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**Wanted to Buy.** One copy of *Walking the Simpson Desert* by Warren Bonython. Geoff Schirmer, Luther College, Plymouth Road, Croydon 3136. Phone (03) 725 0910.

## Club News

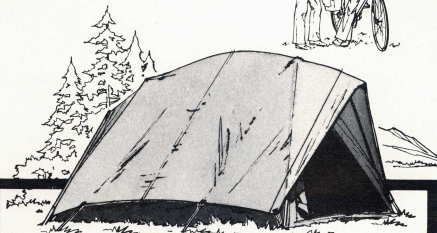
Clubs are invited to use this column to advertise their existence for the benefit of novices and newcomers to their area, to keep members in touch and to give notice of their meeting and other events.

15 cents a word (minimum \$3.00) prepaid. Send notice and payment to Wild Publications Pty Ltd, PO Box 415, Prahran, Victoria 3181.

**Join a canoe club** and learn to paddle safely, be properly equipped, and in good company. The River Canoe Club of NSW is mainly a white water touring club but its membership covers all aspects of canoeing: slalom, marathon, polo, flat water fishing trips, sea kayaking. Contact Jill Boulton, Secretary, (02) 559 4546 or write to GPO Box 2192, Sydney 2001.

**The Victorian Climbing Club** meets at 8 pm on the last Thursday of each month (except December; and second last Thursday in September) at 188 Gatehouse Street, Parkville 3052. Visitors and new members interested in rockclimbing are welcome. Contact the Secretary, GPO Box 1725P, Melbourne, Victoria 3001.

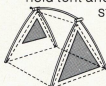
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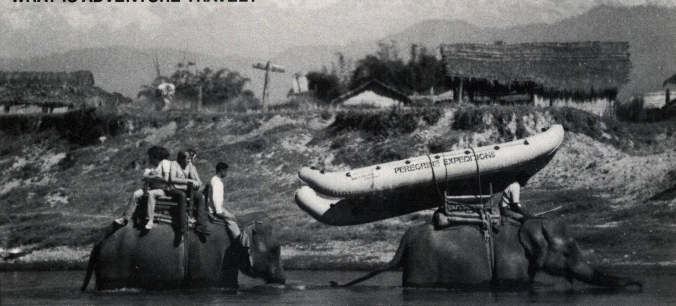
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# Wild Shot

Photo Mark Adams





# Introducing **Blue Ridge** sleeping bags for all seasons Down or Polarguard

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This semi-rectangular bag easily unzips to make a superb quilt, or to match with another Alpine to create a roomy double. Box wall construction, 700 g of high loft down and cotton inner result in a bag that is warm, comfortable and versatile.

**JANNU 800 — 4 season warmth.** The efficiency of box foot design and the versatility of a full length two way opening zipper are combined in this popular bag. Designed to provide year round warmth and comfort anywhere below the snow line. Two Jannus can be joined to form a double.

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**EXPEDITION ONE — Synthetic snow bag.** The same design as the Super Fox but with 4 layers on top and 3 underneath. This bag provides the warmth you need for really cold weather and being Polarguard it will keep you warm even if it gets wet. Comfortable trinity lining throughout.

BLUE RIDGE SLEEPING BAG COMPARISON CHART

Model	Construction	Fill Weight	Fill	Zip	Total Weight	Temp. Rating*	Season Rating
ALPINE 700	Box Wall	700 g	550 loft down	Full	1.70 kg	— 5°	3 to 4 season
JANNU 800	Slant Wall	800 g	550 loft down	Full	1.75 kg	— 10°	4 season
JANNU 900	Slant Wall	900 g	550 loft down	Full	1.85 kg	— 15°	4 season/ snow
SUPER FOX	5 Layer	180g/m <sup>2</sup> /layer	Polarguard	Side	2.20 kg	— 5°	3 to 4 season
EXPED. ONE	7 Layer	180g/m <sup>2</sup> /layer	Polarguard	Side	2.85 kg	— 15°	4 season/ snow

\* Minimum comfort temperature for the average person when sleeping on adequate ground insulation and in a sheltered situation. Due to differing metabolic rates, individuals may find these figures vary by up to  $\pm 10^{\circ}\text{C}$ .



## SHOP LOCATIONS

**Crows Nest** 21 Falcon Street, Phone 439 3511

**City South** 291 Sussex Street, Phone 264 3146



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Pumori, Himalayas. Photo: Dave Moss

